1744. 16pp
Ipswich Public
Ipswich, Massachuse

THE Case of *Satan's* fiery Darts IN *Blasphemous* Suggestions AND *Hellish* Annoyances:

As they were considered in

Several SERMONS,

Heretofore preach'd to the Congregation in *Brattle-Street*, *Boston*, May 1711. and lately repeated to them May 1743.

By *Benjamin Colman*, D. D.
Pastor of said CHURCH.

And now publish'd at the Desire of *some*, who having suffer'd by such *Temptations*, would thus (by the Will of GOD) minister to the Direction and Support of *Others* in like *Spiritual Trouble* and Distress.

Rom. xvi. 20. *The* GOD *of Peace shall bruise* Satan *under your Feet shortly : The Grace of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST *be with you : Amen.*

BOSTON, Printed by ROGERS and FOWLE, for J. EDWARDS in Cornhill. 1744.

Satan's fiery Darts,

IN

Blaſphemous Suggeſtions,

AND

Helliſh Annoyances.

****

JOB II. 9, 10.

Then ſaid his Wife unto him, Doſt thou ſtill retain thine Integrity? curſe GOD and die: But he ſaid unto her, Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh Women ſpeaketh; what? ſhall we receive good at the Hand of GOD, and ſhall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job ſin with his Lips.

WE have heard of the *Patience of Job*, and ſeen the *End of the* LORD; which ſome excellent *Expoſitors* have ſaid was to give an early and *illuſtrious Type* of the *Humiliation of* CHRIST, and *his Sufferings*, in his Way to Glory and *Exaltation*, as our *Interceſſor* at the right Hand of GOD.

Among the many excelling Examples and *Patterns* given us thro' the *Holy Scriptures*, of *Suffering* Affliction and Patience, no One is more remarkable, noble and illuſtrious, teaching and affecting than that of JOB's; in the ſurpriſing *firſt and ſecond* Aſſault of *Satan* upon his *Family*, *Eſtate* and *Perſon*.

The Sovereign and gracious GOD had prov'd *his Grace* in this his Servant in a long *proſperous State*; and now was pleas'd to make a ſudden *Change* upon him, for an equal *Diſplay* of the Power and Glory of his Grace in a State of *deepeſt Affliction*.

Satan

ſudden and *awful* Manner. Can any Thing be *wrong* or unjuſt that a *good GOD* orders to befall us? The Evil of *Affliction* comes from *Him* now, as much as all the *Affluence* of worldly Proſperity that has heretofore diſtinguiſh'd us! and weigh now the *one* againſt the other; what *Good* we have receiv'd all the Days of our Life, and comparatively how few and *light Afflictions*; and then ſay, if we ought not to *bear* ſilently and patiently, and with adoring Submiſſion, the *Evils* which He *now* pleaſes to lay upon us?

This was *Job's* gracious Way of *Reaſoning*; theſe *Thoughts* had kept his own Spirit *calm*, and with the ſame he would *lay* the roil'd Spirit of his Wife, and *ſtop* her muttering and *blaſpheming* Mouth.----The *Good* and the *Evil* of this *Life* are both *from GOD*; his *Sovereignty* (abſtracted from every other Conſideration) accounts for *both* in our State of *Trial*: The *leaſt* of the *Good* is not deſerved, the *Evil* is *all* merited and much *more*; the *Good* is much *more* for Kind, Meaſure and Continuance, thro' our whole Lives, than the Evil; the *Good* is at leaſt neceſſary and what we could not *ſubſiſt* without, the Evil what may be *liv'd* under and outliv'd. The moſt *common* Mercies of this Life are uſually the *greateſt* and moſt needful. The *Good* is not only for Neceſſity, but alſo for Delight; the *Evil* is no more than we *need*, and what we could not do *well* without: The Evil and the Good both come according to GOD's *Covenant-Faithfulneſs* to his own People; the Evil is improvable to the *beſt Good*, and 'tis the Will and Meaning of GOD that we ſo improve it; and (to have done) the *Good* which we receive from the Hand of GOD doth not always give to particular *Graces* an equal *Luſtre*, as does the *Evil*.----Should we not then *receive the Evil* in this State of our *Trial* and Probation? Surely 'tis calculated for *it*; the Honour of GOD requires it; there are *paſſive Graces* which our *fallen* State calls for the Exerciſe of; and CHRIST *the Captain of our Salvation was made perfect thro' Suffering.*

But

But to return.---- In the Words of my *Text* we have one of the moſt *diabolical Motions* that was ever made to a *holy Soul* againſt the bleſſed GOD; and alſo one of the *nobleſt Reſentments* that *ſuch* a Soul is capable of. No Wonder therefore that we find ſo expreſs and full a *Divine Approbation* of *Job*'s gracious and holy *Return* to his *Wife's* outrageous Words: "*In all this did not Job ſin with his Lips.*

Satan aſſaulted him *by her*: He us'd and acted her, and *ſpake* by her Lips: So in the Beginning he *beguiled Eve*, and by her prevail'd on *Adam*. It is one of his curſed *Policies* which he yet continues to aſſault us in the *weakeſt* Place, and by them we *love*. "He ſends Temp- "tations by unſuſpected Hands; theirs that have moſt "Intereſt in us and Influence upon us. Profaneſs in ſuch a *Relative*, or Diſcontent, *Paſſion*, Rage in 'em, is an *unknown* (yet *too well* known) Provocation to Evil.

The curſed Motion in the *Text* is 1. to *hard Thoughts* of the bleſſed GOD and his holy Providence; and 2. to outrageous and *blaſphemous Words*: "Doſt thou ſtill re- tain thy Integrity? *curſe GOD and die*! What could be more furious and extravagant, *impious* and deteſtable. Well might he with *Horror* hear, and *ſpue out* the helliſh *Suggeſtion* with high Indignation and *Deteſtation*; and well is the *Judgment of GOD* given ſtrongly in his *Fa- vour*, on his doing ſo. GOD juſtifies and *honours* him; GOD acquits and *abſolves* him, upon a *firſt and ſecond* fi- ery *Trial*. He approv'd himſelf to be the *perfect and upright Man*. By *not offending in Word*, Jam. iii. 2. Not an *impatient* Word fell from him, under ſo many *ſurpri- ſing* Blows and *Breaches* upon his Perſon, Family and Eſtate! not a Word, but of *Humiliation and Adoration*, when urg'd to *Rebellion* by all the Force and Stratagems of Hell: mov'd as he was to *curſe*, he ſtill kept on *bleſſing*; the curſed Suggeſtion enter'd only his *Ear*, not into his *Soul*; that *abhorr'd* from it.

Let the DOCTRINE therefore, for our *Inſtruction* and Warning, and alſo for *Comfort* and Support as there may be Occaſion, be this,

" That many of GOD's *dear Children* are often annoy'd with curſed and *diabolical Suggeſtions*, which He will never *reckon to them as their Sin*, becauſe they do in their Souls *abhor and reject them* with utmoſt *Deteſtation.*

This was *Job's* Caſe, and ſo it is of many a gracious *Saint* in our *own* Time: We ſee 'em terrify'd and pierc'd with *helliſh* Suggeſtions, which they abhor, and are ready to *ſhriek* out at: they look on 'em as *their own* Wickedneſs, and ſo at themſelves as *Devils* almoſt: they *loathe* themſelves on this Account, and *cry* to GOD for Deliverance, and are in *Anguiſh*, that ever ſuch *foul* Thoughts ſhould have *Acceſs* to them, and as they apprehend *lodge* within them: But what ſays my *Text* to 'em? even as GOD in it did to *Job*; " in *all this* they have *not ſinned.*

I am then in the following *Diſcourſe* to ſpeak to theſe *three Propoſitions*: 1. That the moſt *upright* and deareſt of the *Children* of GOD in his Church on Earth, may be ſometimes *annoy'd* and tormented with ſome of the moſt curſed and *diabolical Suggeſtions*, moſt injurious and diſhonourable to the bleſſed GOD. 2. That theſe *helliſh* Thoughts and *Injections* ſhould be moſt *grievous* and *abhorred* to their holy Souls, and *rejected* with utmoſt Deteſtation. 3. That then they are not *their Sin*, nor will ever be imputed to them by the *Holy GOD.*

I. The deareſt of GOD's *Children* in his Church on Earth may be at Times *annoy'd and terrified*, purſu'd and haunted by ſome of the moſt *curſed* and diabolical *Suggeſtions*, moſt injurious and diſhonourable to the bleſſed GOD.

If *Job* ſuffered thus in his Day, why not the moſt dear and pleaſant *Child* of GOD in ours? Who among *us* ſhall be exempt from *this*, or any other Kind of *fiery Trial*? Nay, a greater *than Job* preſents HIMSELF to us in the Front of the *New Teſtament*: Matth. iv. 1. *Then was* JESUS *led up of the* SPIRIT *into the Wilderneſs, to be tempted*

tempted of the Devil : And when the Tempter came to Him he ſaid, " *If thou be the* SON OF GOD---- ! And again, " *If thou wilt fall down down and worſhip me !---- Then* " JESUS *ſaith unto him,* " *Get thee hence Satan.* What an impudent, impure and *damnable* Motion was this of the *Devil's* to the SON OF THE HIGHEST when He took the *Likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh !* Not only was he mov'd to *diſtruſt* and tempt GOD, but even to *worſhip the Devil.* " Surely then there can be *no Sin ſo foul and monſtrous,* but the *beſt of Saints* may be tempted to it. And *whom* may not *Satan* uſe as a *Tempter* to another, when the *Wife of Job* was ſo abuſed by him, and afterward the Lips of *Peter* to blaſpheme the Purpoſe and *Decree* of GOD, reſpecting the *Sufferings* of CHRIST, as unjuſt and impoſſible, to the very Face of CHRIST, and in the Preſence of his *Fellow-Apoſtles* ; ‡ before *whom* he receiv'd a like *Rebuke* that the *Devil* had in the *Wilderneſs* ; " *Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an Offence to me ; for thou ſavoureſt not the Things that be of GOD.*

When we conſider *Satan's* uſing *Job's Wife* to *vex* his righteous Soul, and draw him into Sin and Rebellion againſt GOD ; it forces into our *Remembrance* his Malice and Subtilty from the Beginning, when he took the Form of the *Serpent* in his *firſt* Temptation, ſo *fatal* to Mankind through all Generations. The *Woman* was firſt in the Tranſgreſſion ; the *Devil* gat into *her*, and by her into *Adam* ; he ſhock'd her by a *horrid Suggeſtion* againſt the Goodneſs and *Truth* of GOD and prevailed ! *Has God indeed ſaid* (ſaid the blaſphemous lying *Spirit*) *ye ſhall not eat, leaſt ye die? Whereas he knows that in the Day you eat, your Eyes will be opened, and you will be like* HIMSELF *for Knowledge* and Underſtanding. The malicious and falſe *Fiend* ſuggeſts to her, that from *Ill-will* and Envy GOD had forbid them the delicious and *improving* Fruit, and that the *Threatning*, by which he had

‡ Matth.xvi.22. For he ſeems not ſo to have *taken him aſide*, as to be out of their *Sight and Obſervation*, if out of *hearing*.

reſtrain'd them, was a *Lye*. In all his *modern* Temptations he takes the *ſame Courſe* ; " he queſtions the *Precept*, he denies the *Danger*, and he ſuggeſts ſome great *Advantage*. So the Devil began with *belying* and reproaching the bleſſed GOD, to alienate Man's Heart from him.

I might mention *two Inſtances* more, which are *famous* in Scripture Story, of the *Wives of good Men*, uſed by the *Devil* to tempt them into *ill Thoughts* of GOD. The firſt is that of *Zipporah* to *Moſes*, when ſhe was terrified into the *Circumciſion* of her Son ; for ſhe ſaw her *Husband* ſtruck *ſick* on his Journey, and threatned with *Death* for the *Omiſſion*, and hereby *diſabled* for the Duty ; ſhe therefore caſt the *Foreskin* at his Feet and ſaid, " *A bloody Husband art thou to me.* This is vulgarly interpreted in Way of *Paſſion* and Wrath ; and for ought I know 'tis the *right* Senſe of the Words, after all the fine *Criticiſm* that has been beſtowed on them, to make them bear another Senſe. Now, in this *literal* Senſe,--- if *Moſes* was a *bloody Husband* for obliging her to execute the Command of GOD in that *bleeding Rite* of Circumciſion ; then what a bloody *Imputation* is here ſuggeſted againſt the good GOD, that He ſhould inſtitute and require it, as the *Sign* and Seal of his *Covenant*, threaten now to ſpill the Blood of *Moſes* for his daring to *omit* it ſo long, from his *Indulgence* to her ! If this were the real *Meaning* and Language of angry *Zipporah*, what a *virulent Reproach* do her Words imply againſt GOD and his gracious Law ?

The other *Inſtance* I pointed at is *Michal* the Wife of *David*, when ſhe ſaw him in his *Tranſport* of holy Zeal and Joy *dancing* before the *Ark* of GOD : She blaſphemed the religious *Act* as *leud* and ſhameful ; and as if it were below the *Dignity* and State of the *King of Iſrael* to diſrobe and *uncover* himſelf ſo before the DIVINE MAJESTY.----Was it *Michal*'s Pride, or was it *Satan*'s Envy and Rage, that we muſt *impute* theſe Reproaches againſt GOD unto ? Doubtleſs ſhe was *poſſeſs'd*, the Devil was in her, and he fill'd her *Heart* with Contempt, and her

Mouth

Mouth with Railings. She vilify'd GOD and his *Ark*, in reviling *David*, his Zeal and Devotion; and GOD laid her under Reproach, and made her *vile* for the reſt of her Life.

But to *return* again: The *Devil* needs no *Inſtruments* by whom to tempt: He has Acceſs to our *Minds*, if GOD do not reſtrain and forbid him, to raiſe and move evil Thoughts in us. He *ſhoots* his fiery Darts, and they *enter* we know not how; but we *feel* 'em pierce and faſten in our Souls. For *how* one *Spirit* acts on another we know not; but *this* we know, that *Satan can fill the Heart againſt the* HOLY GHOST; as in the Caſe of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*.

Sometimes the *Devil has hurried* poor Souls with *Atheiſtical* Thoughts; for he finds *an evil Heart of Unbelief* within us, and foments it at Times, to high Degrees of *Infidelity*; ſo as not only to queſtion the *Myſtery* of the *Trinity*, and therein of JESUS, *GOD manifeſt in Fleſh*; but alſo the very *Being* and incomprehenſible neceſſary *Perfections* of the DEITY; his *Eternity*, perfect *Preſcience* and *Decrees*; which are indeed as the *thick Darkneſs*, or rather *unapproachable Light* wherein the ETERNAL dwells; and into which it may be the *Angels* of Heaven are no more allow'd to *pry* with any Thought of ſearching them out, than the *Church* of old in the *Wilderneſs* was permitted to come near unto the *Bounds* about the *Mount* to *gaze*; into which if they had *look'd*, what could they have *ſeen* but Cloud and Lightning?

The *Word* and *Providence* of GOD are alſo ſpecial Objects of *Satan*'s furious Attack, in his Aſſaulting the *Faith* and *Love* of GOD's Saints. And herein he does by the *Members*, as he did by the HEAD, in the forty Days of our LORD's Temptation.

Thus *Aſaph* was almoſt *born away* headlong into Unbelief and *Deſpondency*; though he had thrown out his *ſtrong Anchor* and Cable, "*Truly GOD is good to Iſrael*, "*even to them that are of a clean Heart*!" Yet could he ſcarce *outride* the furious *Storm*: Pſal. lxxiii.---*But as for me, my Feet were almoſt gone, for I was envious at the fooliſh*,

fooliſh, when I ſaw the Proſperity of the Wicked :----*Verily I have cleanſed my Heart in vain, and waſhed my Hands in Innocence* ! *But ſhould I ſpeak thus, I ſhall offend againſt the Generation of thy Children* !--- Yet *was my Heart grieved and I was pricked in my Reins* ; *ſo fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was even as a Beaſt before Thee* ! For *never the leſs I am continually with thee, thou haſt holden me by my right Hand; and whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee, &c.*

The Rage and Blaſphemy of the *Devil* is eſpecially ſpent againſt the *Faithfulneſs and Truth of GOD, in his Promiſes* and *Threatnings* : he inrages the *wicked* very often by accurſed *Miſrepreſentations* of the *one*, and would drive the *Godly* into *Deſpondencies* and *Deſperation*, by impudent Denials of the *other*. He has a furious *Antipathy* to that *Name* of GOD which is the ſtrong *Tower* of the righteous, and into which they are ever *flying* ; for in it *all his Glory* paſſes before ſinful Man ; Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth* ; *keeping Mercy for Thouſands*, &c. The Devil *ſtabs* a Child of GOD to the Heart, and *pierces* him in the moſt *ſenſible* and tender Part, while he *reproaches* him, and makes him but ſeem to *doubt* the *Goodneſs and Truth* of GOD, his *Covenant-Kindneſs* and *Faithfulneſs*. No Wonder therefore if we find the moſt *Eminent Saints* on holy Record thus afflicted and tormented by the *Blaſphemer* and *Avenger*.----As *Job* was thus outrag'd in my *Text*, ſo were *David* and *Aſaph* and *Heman* in their times, long after ; for the *Tempter* is the *ſame* to all that are living *godly* in every Age ; as *they* are much the *ſame* in reſpect of Faith and Infirmity. *David* tells us in Pſalm xlii. how he went *mourning becauſe of the Oppreſſion of the Enemy*, who inſultingly *reproach'd him from Day to Day*, " *Where is thy GOD* ? It was a *Sword in his Bones*, more for the *Name* of his GOD than the *Scorn* caſt on himſelf ; *the Voice of Him that reproacheth and blaſphemeth* ! *why art thou caſt down O my Soul, and why diſquieted within me* ? *hope thou in GOD, for I*

ſhall

ſhall yet praiſe Him.---- *Aſaph* was a like ſuffering *Saint* by like violent Temptations to *Deſpondency*; Pſal. lxxvii. *His Sore ran in the Night and ceaſed not; his Soul refuſed to be comforted; he remembred GOD* (his Name, Perfections, Promiſes and Works) and yet his *Trouble* remained or increaſed; *his Spirit was overwhelmed* while it *made diligent Search*; " *Will the* LORD *caſt off forever? and will he be favourable no more? is his* MERCY *clean gone forever, and doth his* PROMISE *fail forevermore? hath GOD forgotten to be gracious, hath he in Anger ſhut up his tender Mercies?---I ſaid, this is my Infirmity, I will remember the Years of the right Hand of the moſt High! Thy Way is in the Sea, thy Path as in the great Waters, and thy Footſteps are not known.*--- *Heman* alſo was a Man of like *Sorrows*, and of like *Faith and Devotion*: He has given us a *Pſalm of Inſtruction* to Souls *in the loweſt Pit, in Darkneſs, in the Deeps*; Pſal. lxxxviii. " *O* LORD *GOD of my Salvation, I have cried Day and Night before Thee; let my Prayer come before thee, incline thine Ear unto my Cry; for my Soul is full of Troubles, and my Life draweth nigh unto the Grave;*----*why caſteſt thou off my Soul, why hideſt thou thy Face from me? LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have ſtretched out my Hands to thee*; and ſtill *in the Morning ſhall my Prayer prevent thee*: After all the Toſſings of the *Night*, the Light of the *Morning* ſhall find me praying.

In fine, it has often been the *Complaint* of humble and gracious Perſons, that they have found themſelves annoy'd with *unaccountable irreverent, fooliſh, vile, filthy, baſe*, abominable Thoughts; They know not *what, how* or *why*! but they ſeem to *buzz* about 'em like *Swarms of Flies*, or break about 'em like *Sparkles of Fire*; more eſpecially when they would ſet themſelves to *meditate* and *pray*, and have their Minds moſt *ſolemn* and *compoſed* and *cloſe* with GOD in holy Exerciſes.---Now what ſhall we ſay to theſe *Satanical* Moleſtations and Diſturbances? On the *Serpent's* part it is more *eaſy* to account for it, from his *Spite* and Malignity againſt GOD and his Grace; but on the part of GOD, his Permiſſion

of

of *Baalzebub* herein, and the *holy Ends* of his gracious Government; it may be more *difficult* for us to conceive aright.

1. On the part of *Satan* it is obvious to account for it from his implacable *Hatred* of GOD, and of *Souls recovering* into his Holineſs and Favour; from which he is himſelf utterly and forever *excluded.* He *hates* GOD becauſe of his *Holineſs,* and for his righteous *Judgment,* his Power and *Vengeance*; which it is his *Torment* to think of, and know it *coming* on him. So when the *fierce Devils,* "exceeding fierce from the *Tombs,* whither they had driven the *two poſſeſſed,* beheld their *Judge, the* HOLY ONE OF GOD in their Way, and were corrected by his Power and ſtopt; Matth. viii. 29. *They cried out ſaying,* "*What have we to do with thee;* JESUS *thou Son of GOD! art thou come to torment us before the Time?* It is the Devil's *Torment* to behold Angels or Men holy and *happy,* while he is miſerable. He hates GOD becauſe he is *unlike* him, and under his *Wrath*; he ſpitefully hates to ſee GOD *ſerv'd* and glorify'd by others; he would pollute and damn our Souls, that we may be as *he is,* impure and odious to GOD. He affects a *Kingdom* of his own on Earth, in Oppoſition to the Kingdom of GOD and of Grace. He could not bear to ſee *Man* in *Paradiſe,* and be himſelf in *Hell*; to ſee *Adam* in the Likeneſs and Love of GOD and worſhipping before Him, and *himſelf* caſt from thoſe Felicities. *Curs'd* in his Rage on this Account, beyond a common damned *Ghoſt* I may ſuppoſe, he wiſhes for *Millions* and *Worlds* to follow by his Means into the State of eternal Miſeries; and having beguiled our miſerable *firſt Parent* into an Apoſtacy from GOD, and finding *himſelf* only the *more damned,* and a SAVIOUR revealed for the *Sons of Men*; and Him a ſingular and eminent SEED of that very *Woman* whom he had deceived into Sin and Miſery; his *Envy* and *Hatred* againſt all her natural *Seed,* but more eſpecially againſt the bleſſed and *promiſed* ONE Himſelf, and thoſe that ſhould *believe* on his Name, has been ſo *inflam'd*---that *as a roaring Lion*

Lion he drives thro' the World, (and is *going up and down in it*, which are his own Words) *ſeeking whom he may devour*; And whom he cannot *deſtroy* he loves to *diſtreſs*, affright and ſcare, *terrify* and wound; or *worry* if he cannot *rend*; and no wonder if he *roar* the more, when he *ſees* and cannot *reach* his Prey; as in the *Caſe* of *Job*, and Souls *upright* like him: --- Or like a *Dog* rather he goes *about the City*, and haunts the Villages like the *Wolf* by night; grinning and barking at the *Flock of* CHRIST and his *Lambs*, whoſe *Blood* he thirſts after. So the HOLY GHOST has repreſented to us our *Adverſary the Devil*, 1 Peter v. 8. ſhown us our *Enemy* and Danger: So that on the *Tempter's* part it is *eaſy* to ſay, *why* he annoys *Souls* with his helliſh *Suggeſtions* againſt the bleſſed GOD; he hates both GOD and them, and deſires nothing more than to ſee GOD *diſhonoured* and *them* polluted, that they may be damned.---- This was his Wiſh and *Hope* in his Attempt on holy *Job*; to bring the *Man of boaſted Integrity to curſe his GOD*; and for the ſame Reaſon he deſired to have the *Sifting of Peter* who was too ready to *boaſt* in himſelf; *though all Men forſake thee, yet will not I*: Luke xxii. 31. *Satan has deſired to have thee, to ſift thee as Wheat*: to have him for *his own* if it might be, and carry him off an *eaſy Prey*, if CHRIST had not *pray'd for him that his Faith ſhould not fail*; but if *that* may not be, he deſires however by *winnowing* to *ſhake and toſs him furiouſly*, and ſhow his *Chaff*.

In ſhort, as Dr. *Tillotſon* has it: "*Malice* againſt "GOD and *Envy* to Men account for *Satan's* Tempt- "ing us; to *ſpoil* (if he can) GOD of his Subjects and "*debauch* them from their Allegiance, into his own *Condemnation*, Malignity and Miſery.---A *Ghoſt in Hell* does not preſently commence *Devil*, in this Height of Malignity againſt GOD and Cruelty toward Fellow-Sinners; if we may take Leave to form an *Idea* to our ſelves by the Words which the *Parable* puts into the Mouth of the *rich Man* there; "*Nay Father Abraham, but if one* "*went to them from the Dead they would repent! Send* "*Lazarus therefore to my Father's Houſe, for I have five*

" *Brethren* ; *that he may teſtify unto them, leſt they come* " alſo *into this Place of Torment !*---- The *beſt Thing*, I ſuppoſe, that was ever intimated with Reſpect to a *loſt Soul* in Hell : but ſuch a *parabolical* Repreſentation means not to *affirm* any Thing with Reſpect to *Hell* itſelf, but only to *affect* and move the *Bowels of Sinners*, to themſelves and others, in our *preſent State* of Probation and Repentance.

2. It may be more *difficult* for us to *dive* into the wiſe and holy *Ends* of GOD, in his *Permiſſion* of theſe *fiery* Aſſaults of *Satan* upon the Children of his *Love*.

It was a moſt *dark* Diſpenſation to pious *Job* and his *Friends*, when it was *his* Caſe : his *Wife* broke out even into *Blaſphemy* upon it, and his *Friends* afterward *rent their Garments*, and ſat down by him *ſilent* and aſtonied, *wailing* and in Fears : It amaz'd *Job himſelf* under the *Conſcience of his Integrity* ; and it threw his *Friends* into horrid Tears and *Suſpicions* of ſome heinous *Iniquity* by which he had provoked the *Wrath* and Judgment of GOD in ſo *many* and heavy Inſtances of it at once : But while He now ſtands in the Eyes of ſome, as the " *Hero* " of an inſpir'd *Epic. Poem*,† brave in Diſtreſs, valiant " in Affliction, maintaining his Character for Vertue " and Piety under the moſt powerful Temptations, and " exaſperating Provocations, that the Malice of Hell " could invent ; let us take a more *adoring View* of the *End of the* LORD herein ; to repreſent unto his *Choſen and Sanctified* through all Generations, in every Part of his viſible Church ; that he ſhould in *like Manner*, here and there, call *one and another* of them, as unto *ſingle Combat* with the *Enemy* of their Salvation ; arming 'em beforehand with the *Shield of Faith*, *the Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs*, *the Sword of the Spirit*, whereby they ſhould be able to *quench* the fiery Darts of the *wicked One* ; and *ſtand* as *Job* did in the *evil Day*, and come off Conquerors and *more than Conquerors thro'* JESUS that *has loved them*. Epheſ. vi. 10, 11, 12. Rom. viii. 37, 38.

† Sir *Richard Blackmore*.

1. The

1. The *Sovereignty* of GOD muſt ſet us down *ſilent* under ſuch *aſtoniſhing Diſpenſations, Trials and Exerciſes* of his moſt *gracious Saints*; nor may his *Will*, Wiſdom, *Goodneſs* and Faithfulneſs be doubted, *queſtion'd* or diſputed by *Them* or others. It was (without Doubt) the *Error* of *Job* and his *Friends* that they enter'd *ſo far* into an *Argument* and Diſpute about the *Reaſons* of the *Divine Conduct* reſpecting him; which may ſeem too much verging toward *a Saying unto GOD, what doſt thou?* or *why* haſt thou done this? which *who ſhall ſay?* Eccleſ. viii. 4. Therefore *Job* and his *Friends* receiv'd no other *Anſwer* from Heaven, either firſt by *Elihu* who ſpake under a Divine Impulſe and *Inſpiration*, nor afterward by the more immediate *Voice out of the Whirlwind*, but the *unaccountable Greatneſs, Majeſty* and moſt certainly *wiſe and perfect Dominion* and Government of GOD *moſt High and Holy*. All Fleſh muſt be *ſilent* before Him; be *dumb* and not open their *Mouth* becauſe GOD does it! be *ſtill* and know that it is of GOD; like *Aaron* hold their *Peace*, like *Eli* ſay "*It is the LORD*!----*Job* and his *Friends* did but *darken Counſel by Words without Knowledge*, while they were ready to fix *one Rule* and Meaſure in all Providential Diſpenſations. We are let into the *Secret* and Reaſon in the *Caſe of Job*, that we may learn to reſt *ſatisfied* in the Will of GOD, and the Diſpoſitions of Providence, *whatever* befals our ſelves or others. GOD is wiſe and holy, and his *Work perfect*, in all Things that reſpect either his *Children* or his *Enemies*. We may neither ſay, "*Why does the Way of the Wicked proſper*? Or wherefore does GOD ſeem to *look favourably* upon the Way of them *that deal treacherouſly*? And why do they *devour the Man that is more righteous*? without laying down to our ſelves, and that ſtrongly, an immoveable Foundation, as the *Prophet* does, Hab. i. 12. 13. "*Art thou not from Everlaſting, O* LORD *my GOD, my* HOLY ONE? *thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*. So when the Prophet *Jeremiah* was ready to have *pleaded with GOD*, and was tempted to *talk with him of his Judgments*, he was *inſpir'd* firſt to

lay down this Principle, never to be departed from, but ever kept in Mind, " *righteous art thou O* LORD !

2. As GOD will not ſuffer his *upright* Servants to be *tempted* above what they are *able* to bear, but will with the *Temptation* find a Way for their *Eſcape*, ſo his gracious *Purpoſe* in permitting *Satan's fiery Aſſaults* on their Souls, is to *glorify his Grace* in their *holy bearing* and reſiſting them, and ſo by the *Weakneſs of Man* to make the *Triumphs of Grace* the more glorious over the Subtlety, Malice and *Wrath of Satan.* So it was iu the Conflict of *Job*,----" Let me try his *boaſted Grace* (ſaid the *Tempter*) and he'll curſe thee to thy Face ; " He is in *thy Hand* (ſaid GOD) and *my Grace* in him ſhall *triumph* glorioufly over *thy* Spite and Power. Therefore when he held faſt his *Integrity* under the *firſt Scene* of dreadful Trials, the ALMIGHTY even gloried in him over his falſe and cruel Enemy, Job ii. 3. " *And ſtill he holdeth faſt his Integrity ; although thou movedſt me againſt him.* And in the *Record* of theſe Sufferings and Patience of *Job*, the *Grace* of GOD is glorified to his *Church* forever in the Power, the Riches and *Alſufficiency* thereof. The *perfect Man* came out of his *firſt* and *ſecond* Fire, as the *three Worthies* did out of the *fiery Furnace*, without the leaſt *Smell* upon him, or his *Raiment* ſo much as ſcorch'd : And as the LORD GOD OF HOSTS, the *GOD of Iſrael* was magnified in the Sight of *Nebuchadnezzar* and all the *Princes* of his vaſt Empire, in the one *Miracle* of Power ; ſo is the Power of *Faith*, Patience, Penitence, Adoration, Submiſſion glorified to the *Saints* of GOD in *all Ages* by the Hiſtory of *Job* ; and perpetual Glory is *render'd* by the Church on *his* Account from Age to Age. And how abundantly *crowned* then is that *Trial of Faith*, whatever it be, by *manifold Temptations for a Seaſon*, tho' it be tried by *Fire*, which ſhall be *found to Praiſe Honour and Glory* unto the *Day of Chriſt*, and *in* that glorious Day, and unto all *Eternity* ?---- Thus has the LORD *ſet apart* ſome *for Himſelf !* And " they *ſhall be mine* ſays the LORD in the Day when *I make up my Jewels !* " *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion and Adder, the young Lion and the Dragon*

Dragon ſhalt thou trample under Foot! becauſe he hath ſet his Love upon me, (and ſhewn it by *truſting* in me) *therefore will I deliver him; I will ſet him on High, becauſe he hath known my Name; he ſhall call upon me and I will anſwer him; I will be with him in Trouble, I will deliver him and honour him*: Pſalm xci. Thus GOD did by his Servant *Job*, and ſo he often *glorifies his Grace* in the ſuffering Members of a tempted *Saviour*, that they may *glorify him*, by being *Types* of Him.

3. *Satan* may be permitted to diſtreſs the Souls of GOD's Children by his foul Suggeſtions, to *ſhow them the Corruption that is in them by Nature*, and the ſad *Remains* of it after their Regeneration, their *Weakneſs* and *Danger*, and abſolute *Dependance* in their beſt Eſtate on his *free Grace* for Preſervation and Safety. GOD lets 'em *ſee* what they are *liable* to, and *capable* of, if he ſhould *leave* 'em; what Enemies beſet them and whither they would hurry 'em. GOD ſhews 'em *Themſelves* and effectually *abaſes* 'em, makes 'em low and *vile* in their own Eyes, fills 'em with *Shame* and *Fear*, and makes 'em to know that they are but *Duſt* and Pollution: This makes 'em *watch and pray* with a holy *Jealouſy* of themſelves, leſt as *Satan beguiled Eve* he prevail over them her *Offspring*, conceived in *Sin*, and ſhapen in Iniquity. GOD brings them to *Deſpair* in themſelves, and to *truſt* only in CHRIST for Righteouſneſs and Strength, for *preſent* as well as *future* and eternal Salvation. Pſalm xvii. 7, 8, 9. "Shew thy marvellous *Lov-*
" *ing Kindneſs*, O thou that *ſaveſt* by thy right Hand
" them which put their *Truſt* in Thee, from thoſe that
" *riſe* up againſt them: Keep me as the *Apple of the*
" *Eye*, hide me under the *Shadow of thy Wings*; from
" the *Wicked that oppreſs me*, from my *deadly Enemies*
" that compaſs me about! like *as a Lion* that is greedy of
" his Prey,--*ariſe O* LORD, diſappoint him, caſt him down.

Satan ſees the natural Profaneſs, *Atheiſm* and Infidelity of our evil Hearts; that there are the *Seeds* of all Impiety, *Blaſphemy* and Malignity in us, he makes his Advantage of this *natural* Propenſity in us, and while he watches

watches to *inflame* the Soul from *within* it ſelf, GOD *fruſtrates* him in his miſchievous Device, by diſcovering to the *Soul* its own *native Viciouſneſs* and Impurity; with its abſolute *Need* of the Succours of *Almighty Grace*; and that *ſelf-loathing* and abhorring, with *Fear* and Trembling, it muſt only go and *caſt it ſelf* upon ſovereign *Mercy*: Pſalm cxliii. *I flee unto Thee to hide me, quicken me O* LORD *for thy Name Sake*; *for thy Righteouſneſs ſake bring my Soul out of Trouble*; *and of thy Mercy cut off mine Enemies, and deſtroy all them that afflict my Soul*; *for I am thy Servant.* Thus the *Reſult* of all is,

4. GOD permits and uſes the foul and furious *Aſſaults of Satan* upon the Souls of his Children unto the *moſt kind and gracious Event and Iſſue*, to be truly the *Means* of a *great Increaſe of Grace* in them, and of *their Eſtabliſhment and Perſeverance* in Grace, and very often of much *Light and Comfort*, *Peace and Joy* in believing. "The *grievous Chaſtning* yields the *peaceable Fruits* of "Righteouſneſs to them that are exerciſed thereby; "wherefore *lift up* the Hands that hang down and the "feeble Knees; and make *ſtrait Paths* for your Feet; "leſt that which is *lame* be turned out of the Way, "but rather let it be *healed.*

The *Temptation* in it ſelf tends only to *defile and pollute*, but GOD makes it *purifying*; its natural and deſigned Tendency is only to darken and *torture*, but GOD *turns the Shadows of Death into the Light of the Morning.* It has been, I doubt not, the *firſt Means* of ſaving *Converſion* to many a *Soul*, the *Means* alſo of *Growth* and *Increaſe* to many a *regenerate* Perſon, and the *Forerunner* of a *confirmed Peace* to many a happy *Penitent* and true *Believer* in CHRIST. I ſay,

1. The Means of the firſt *ſaving* effectual *Conviction* and true *Awakening* to many a *Sinner.* GOD holds the *Devil* in thoſe *Chains of Darkneſs* as to make him againſt his *Will*, and contrary to his own wicked *Deſign*, to ſerve and *miniſter* in bringing ſome of his *Elect* into a ſaving *Fight* to the Blood of CHRIST, and *Subjection* to him as *Prince and Saviour.* So the *Shepherd* uſes the barking of his *Dog* to bring back a *ſtray Sheep* to the Fold. "*The wick-*

ed is ſnared in the Work of his own Hands; Higgaion Selah! i. e. put a ſpecial *Remark* on this; it is a *Point* that deſerves our deepeſt *Attention.* Pſal. ix. 16.

Satan would not *chuſe* (we may well think) to *diſreſt* a Soul that is at *Eaſe* in Sin, but rather would *ſoothe* and rock him into a ſounder *Sleep*: but the Tempter may be ſo *infatuated* at times, for ought we know, as to raiſe thoſe Fears and *Horrors* in ſome under their *firſt* (and but common) Conviction, which he can *never* lay again, and which free Grace makes to *iſſue* in their ſaving *Converſion.* Or rather may we not think, that GOD having awaken'd the Soul, and *Satan* fearing to *loſe* his hold of it, his *Rage* is over ruled to *promote* and carry on the good Work of GOD begun, and to *drive* the Soul faſter and cloſer to its SAVIOUR.

2. It may be a more ſenſible and *evident* thing in the *Kingdom of* GOD's *Grace within Men*, that the *Aſſaults of Hell* upon them are frequently made the *Means of Increaſe* in Grace, and of the *Progreſs* of Sanctification. The *Tempter* attempts, again and again, to *blaſt* the Work of Grace begun, to bring it to a *ſtop*, to deter and *diſhearten* the pious Soul in its Way: "there is a *Lion* in the ſtreet, "an *Adder* in the Path! deſiſt or turn back!--- but GOD *turns* the affrighting Suggeſtion to Unbelief and *Deſpondency*, into an *Alarm* unto *Faith*, holy *Fear*, Prayer and Fortitude; ſo that what was meant to affright aſtoniſh and *deter*, is made to *quicken* unto Prayer, Watchfulneſs and Diligence, in a more earneſt Flight to the SPIRIT of Grace for Succour, and to the atoning cleanſing Blood of a great SAVIOUR and INTERCESSOR: by which means you may have often found, O buffetted *Child* of GOD, that you had been leſs *humble*, careful, *ſollicitous* and anxious about your ſpiritual State, and in your Walk with GOD, if you had never *felt* thoſe *Conflicts* with your ſpiritual Adverſaries, which a holy GOD has mercifully call'd you to endure, and has carried you through. Theſe are the *Beginnings of Revenges upon the Enemy*, which call upon all *around* the ſuffering *Children* of GOD to *rejoice with them*, and on their

their Account.----Shall I *ſay to them* what I have *tho't*, and been *perſwaded* from what I have *heard and ſeen* from ſuch diſtreſſed *Chriſtians* under the Perſecutions of ſome unſeen evil Adverſary ; " You *love* GOD much the more, and *fear* him more, and *adore* him better, and *walk* the more *humbly and cloſely* with Him, and *hate Sin* the more, and *pray the better*, and are the more *circumſpect meek and lowly* in Heart, and have really much the more *Communion* with GOD, from what you have *ſuffer'd* by the Malice and Wrath of *Satan*. So *his Wrath* ſhall praiſe GOD by *your Lips*, as long as you live ; and the *Remainder thereof* GOD *will reſtrain*.

Upon all

3. The fiery *Aſſaults of Hell* upon the dear *Children of GOD* prove the *Means*, as of their greater *Purification* from Sin and Growth in *Holineſs*, ſo of all *Joy and Peace in believing* to them. The Affliction for the preſent is very *grievous*, but it yields the *peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs to them that are exerciſed thereby*. So *bleſſed is the Man that has endured Temptation*, for after the *Conflict* comes the *Crown* : *Light is ſowing* through all the Clouds and Darkneſs, Rain or Tempeſt, *for the Righteous, and Gladneſs for the Upright in Heart* : As *Job* found it in the Day when GOD *juſtified* him, after he had *humbled* him and made him *viler* than the Duſt in his own Eyes ; " *Go to my Servant* (ſaid the Holy One) *and he ſhall pray for you*. The *Joy of Victory* follows upon *Satan's* Aſſault and *Defeat*. GOD *crowns* the humble *Overcomer* with Garlands of Joy here ſometimes, and will with thoſe of Glory hereafter ; for *when he is tried he ſhall receive the Crown of Life*. *Job* ſhone the *brighter* all his After-life in the Eyes of all about him ; and it was to him the ſame Thing as if he had only been in the *Mount with Moſes*, and came down with his *Face*. *His* reſtored *Proſperity* was doubly *ſerene* and pleaſant, both to *himſelf* and his *Friends*. He was ſeen and lov'd like *David* long after, when he came back with the *Sword and Head of the Giant* in his Hand. So ſhall it be *done* to *Him* whom the *King of Saints delights to honour*. -----

When

When *Aſaph* alſo had got *through* his Temptation, hear how he *triumph'd* in his GOD and over the Enemy: Pſalm lxxiii. 23, 24. *Never the leſs I am continually with Thee, thou haſt holden me by my right Hand; thou ſhalt guide me by thy Counſel, and afterward receive me to Glory: Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is nothing on Earth that I deſire beſide thee: my Heart and my Fleſh faileth, but thou art the Strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever.* *Aſaph*'s ſore *Dejections* clear'd the Way to theſe his *Exultations*; which bring to Mind the *Words of* CHRIST *to his Diſciples*, when they return'd from their *more eaſy Acqueſts* over *Satan*, "LORD, *the very Devils are ſubject to us through thy Name*: "'Tis ſo, replied the late *tempted* JESUS,----*I beheld Satan as Lightning fall from Heaven! but in this rejoice not that the Devils are ſubject to you; but that your Names are written in Heaven.* Victory over *Satan's Temptations*, in ſome of his remarkable and violent, but more eſpecially in the *Courſe* of his ordinary Aſſaults, may miniſter unto us the *joyous Hope* of our *Election* of GOD, and of our final *Perſeverance* in Grace. No doubt but holy *Job* ſpent the latter Part of his Life in the more bleſſed *Aſſurance* of his Intereſt in the Love of GOD, and in the *Joys* thereof; by the *Breaches* which *Satan* was permitted to make on him for a *Seaſon*. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. "Wherein ye *greatly rejoice*, though now for a *Seaſon* (if need be) ye are in *Heavineſs* thro' *manifold Temptations*, that the *Trial of Faith*, tho' tried as with *Fire*, may be found unto *Praiſe and Honour and Glory in the Day of* CHRIST. This is but as CHRIST himſelf ſuffer'd, being *tempted*, and the *Conſolations of* GOD flow'd down upon him. Matth. iv. 11. *Get thee hence Satan, and the Devil left him, and Angels came and miniſter'd to him.* Thoſe holy *benevolent Spirits are miniſtring Spirits to the Heirs of Salvation*; and never ſo more *gladly*, than when they have ſeen *'em combatting* with the *Powers of Darkneſs*, and ſtedfaſtly *reſiſting* them. So the *Darkneſs* of the *Night* makes the *Light* of the *Morning* pleaſant, and even *Dirt and Sand* are us'd to *ſcour* and brighten the Veſſel, and the *ſcullions* foul

Ipswich Public Lib
Ipswich, Massachus

Hands to *waſh* and cleanſe it. So *Silver* and *Gold* paſs through *Fire* and are *refined*: only the *Droſs* is purged away.

Thus we have look'd a little into this *dark Diſpenſation* of *Divine Providence*; this *myſterious Conduct* of *Sovereign Grace*, in the *Permiſſion* of the *fiery Aſſaults* of *Satan* upon ſome of the *deareſt* Children of GOD: Altho' they are *dear to GOD*, and *He ſo to them*, yet are they ſometimes *annoy'd* with *hideous* hateful *Suggeſtions* againſt his *Holineſs and Glory*. GOD has his wiſe, moſt holy and gracious *Ends* in this Permiſſion; *Glory to Himſelf*; and much *ſpiritual Good* to theſe his *favourite* Sufferers.

I will only add,----When our LORD gave the *Tempter* his laſt *Rebuke*, upon his moſt *horrid* Aſſault, He *paſſed* immediately upon his *public Miniſtry*: And his *Apoſtle* St. *Paul* was *eſtabliſhed* and *enlarged* in his *abundant Labours* and extenſive Services, by the *Meſſengers of Satan* of one kind and another, that *dogg'd* and ſet upon him, where ever he went: I'll read you ſome Account of it, and *conclude* on this Head, 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9, &c. "We "are *troubled* on every ſide, yet not *diſtreſſed*, we are "*perplexed* but not in *Deſpair*; *perſecuted* but not *forſa-*"*ken*, caſt *down*, but not *deſtroyed*; always *bearing* a-"bout in the *Body* the *Dying* of the LORD JESUS, that "the *Life alſo of* JESUS may be made *manifeſt* in our "Body;----For which Cauſe we *faint not*, but though "our *outward Man periſh*, yet the *inward Man is renewed* "Day by Day: For our *light Affliction*, which is but "for a *Moment* worketh for us a *far more exceeding and* "*eternal Weight of Glory*: While we *look*, not to the "Things that are *ſeen*, but at the Things which are "*not ſeen*; for the Things which are *ſeen* are *temporal*, "but the Things which are *not* ſeen are *eternal*.

I come now to the *ſecond* Thing propoſed, which is,

II. Theſe helliſh *Suggeſtions*, and horrid *diabolical* Thoughts, as they ſhould and will be moſt *grievous* and abhorred to a holy Soul, ſo ought they to be *rejected* and caſt out with utmoſt *Deteſtation*.

It is not only Matter of *Fact* and Experience, but alſo of *Neceſſity*, that they are thus *grievous* to and abhorred by a *holy Mind*: As it is *Duty* to GOD, ſo where *Grace* is in Exerciſe it is in the Nature of Things neceſſary. ----*Job* appears in the *Text* as if *ſtab'd* to the Heart by his *Wife's* hideous Words; he *anſwers* the foul Temptation with Abhorrence, he *ejects* the curſed Thought, he *reprehends* her with Indignation, and calls her a *fooliſh* wicked Woman; and *argues* on GOD's Behalf, *why* utmoſt Reverence, Love, Fear, Gratitude, Adoration Submiſſion was *due* from him to the *bleſſed* GOD, and ſhould ever be *render'd* by him, by the Help of his Grace: *What? Shall we receive Good at the Hand of the LORD, and ſhall we not receive Evil?* Thus *Grace* will direct, urge and *conſtrain us* to think and ſpeak in any like Caſe; as we know it was exhibited by our bleſſed SAVIOUR in his Temptations.

But let us take the *Truth* before us, the *Duty* propounded to us, in its ſeveral *Parts*, and briefly ſpeak to each of them: Theſe *infernal* Thoughts and *Injections*, ſhould be very *grievous* and diſtreſſing to us, we ſhould heartily *deteſt* 'em, *reject* and ſpue 'em out as ſoon as they ariſe in us, if we can; and at the ſame Time *fortify* our ſelves with holy *Reaſoning* and Argument, as we are able; as *Job* piouſly and wiſely did under the Direction and Aſſiſtance of GOD.

1. They ſhould be very *grievous* and diſtreſſing to our Souls, and they neceſſarily *are* ſo to a gracious Heart. *As a Sword in our Bones* it ſhould be to us as it was to *David*: Pſal. xlii.----It is hard to hear our *ſelves*, a *Parent* or a *Friend*, any whom we eſteem and reverence, ſpoken evil of or *reviled*; but how much more dear and *ſacred* is the Name and *Glory* of *GOD moſt*

High, good and holy, wiſe and juſt, to a pious Heart? "*Holy and reverend is his Name! Him thou ſhalt fear, to him thou ſhalt cleave and Him thou ſhalt ſerve! He is thy Praiſe and He is thy GOD.* Deut. x. 20. *That glorious and fearful Name, the* LORD *thy GOD.* xxviii. 58.

It ſhould be *grievous* to apprehend the *Enemy of GOD and of all Righteouſneſs* ſo *nigh* us, and that by our *Apoſtacy* from GOD he has ſuch *Acceſs* to us. It may well *ſcare* us to think that he is or has been (as it were) *at our right Hand*, and whiſpering into our *Ear* with a *contagious* filthy Breath; Things ſo *impious* in themſelves, and to us *pernicious* without the Succours of preſerving Grace.

It ſhould be *horrible* to imagine (but that the Heart is *conſcious* to its own Wickedneſs) that *Satan* ſhould ſee any Way of *Entrance* into us for his helliſh *Blaſphemies*, and Profaneſs! or that he ſhould conceive the leaſt *Hope of Succeſs* againſt us, in ſuch barefac'd Infidelity, *Atheiſm* and Deviliſm! that he ſhould ſeem to *ſee* us *ſo like* himſelf! or that any of the *Humane Race*, but eſpecially under the Light of the *Goſpel*, could be really *ſuch incarnate Devils*, as this would render them.

We may well *tremble* with Horror from a pious *Self-Love*, leſt thoſe helliſh Suggeſtions ſhould make any Impreſſion, find the leaſt Entertainment in us, or Compliance from us. For ſooner ſhould we chuſe *to ceaſe to be*, then to be capable of *regarding* and yielding to a *Thought* of this Nature, againſt the Being, Holineſs and Glory of the GOD that made us! which were to *bring up Hell* from beneath, and *act the Devil* in open Day-Light.

In a Word, It ſhould grieve us to think or know that there is any ſuch Degree of *Malignity* againſt GOD in any *Creature* whatſoever! That even *Hell* it ſelf can ſhow any Thing ſo vile and unclean. As one would be ſcar'd to ſee a *Devil*, ſo this *Idea* of diabolical *Spleen* and Hatred, and of *ſpiritual Filthineſs*, may juſtly make our *Blood* run *cold* thro' every Vein, and the *Hair* of our Head to *riſe* up an End!

So

So grievous and terrifying have the *blaſphemous Suggeſtions of Satan* been to holy Souls, in whom the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD dwells and rules, having fill'd them with *Faith and Love, Reverence and godly Fear.*

2. We muſt therefore in our Souls *deteſt* and *loathe*, feel and expreſs a vehement *Abhorrence* of ſuch *helliſh Suggeſtions.* " *Do I not hate them, that hate thee* ? (ſaid holy *David*, teaching us to *feel* and ſpeak *thus* after him, Pſalm cxxxix) *and am I not grieved with them that riſe up againſt Thee* ? *I hate 'em with perfect Hatred,-- I count them my Enemies* : *Search me O GOD and know Heart, try me and know my Thoughts, and ſee Thou* and ſhow to *me* if it be not thus.

What ſhould our Souls equally *deteſt*, as this expreſſed open Enmity, Hatred, Contempt and *Spite* againſt the Holy GOD ? At what ſhould they equally *riſe*, burſting with Anger *Diſdain* and Wrath ? *Meekneſs*, I had well nigh ſaid, were here a *Vice* ; and *Mildneſs* the Want of *Zeal* ; did I not call to Mind the *Arch-Angel's* Words when *contending with the Devil* ; how far he kept from any *railing Accuſation*, but only ſaid " *the LORD rebuke thee.* Provok'd *Abiſhai* could not preſerve a *like* Government of himſelf when *Shimei* only railed againſt his *Earthly King* ; " *Shall this dead Dog curſe my Lord* ? ſaid he : But what would *David* himſelf have ſaid, had the *Curſe* been utter'd againſt his *King* and GOD, the LORD *of Glory* ? The baſphemous *Being* and his *Act* had equally been the *hated of David's Soul*, and ſhould be of *ours* ? Although there *needs* no imprecating any *Curſe* upon the *Devil*, *curs'd* as he is long ſince from the Mouth of GOD, and under the Sentence of eternal Death.----" If any Man *love not our* LORD JESUS CHRIST *let him be Anathema, Maran-atha*, ſays the *Apoſtle* 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Which is to ſay, *curſed* in the *higheſt Manner* and *Degree* ! how *accurſed* then to us ſhould the *Devil* and his *blaſphemous* Suggeſtions be, which breathe implacable and *furious Hatred* againſt the *Being*, Bleſſedneſs and *Grace* of God to us thro' JESUS CHRIST our LORD ?

An

An *Idolater* won't ſuffer his *dumb* and dead *Idol* to be ſpoken againſt; if he calls it his *God* he will not bear to hear it deſpiſed; an *Egyptian* of old would have *ſton'd* the Man that ſhould have ſacrificed his *Abomination* before his Eyes; nor would One of all the *rout at Epheſus* endure a Blaſphemer of their *Goddeſs Diana*! Nor is there a modern *Zealot* of *Rome Antichriſtian*, but thinks it *meritorious* to be the *Death* of you if you affront their *Wafer-Idol* the *Hoſt*, when elevated in the *Church*, or when carried through the *Streets* in Form and Pomp. Can then the leaſt Thought be *whiſper'd* in our *Minds* againſt the Honour of our GOD and SAVIOUR, and not wound and pierce them? ſhould not that be *execrable* to us, which is reproachful and *contemptuous* of HIM? What *Devotion*, what Love or Fear of GOD, can there be in us, if this Reſentment and *Indignation* be wanting in us, when his Name is *blaſphemed*? And when the *Endeavour* is to make us *Partners in the Blaſphemy*? ----- Well was it made a *Law* to the *Iſrael of GOD*, Levit. xxiv. 15. *Whoſoever curſeth his GOD ſhall bear his Sin, and he that blaſphemeth the Name of the* LORD *ſhall ſurely be put to Death, and all the Congregation ſhall certainly ſtone him with Stones.*

3. To expreſs our Deteſtation of a *blaſphemous Injection* we ſhould *inſtantly reject* and *ſpue out the Abomination*, and not *ſuffer the vile Thought to lodge* in us. As it is but *riſing* and *entring*, we muſt *rebuke*, ſuppreſs, forbid and *curſe* it in the Name of the LORD. Let us vehemently turn away, and neither *hearken* nor *argue*; as *Calvin* † adviſes. The *cloven Foot* is ſeen here at once, and there needs not a Moment's Thought what to do.

† Caveamus itaque, ne *Satanæ* his Flabellis nos adverſus DEUM ſollicitanti Aures præbeamus; ne ab illo circumveniamur: Monemur, ejuſmodi Blaſphemias, ut quæ *Satanæ* Vomitus, acriter eſſe redarguendas: Vehementiam opponere debemus; non enim ludendum eſt cum furioſo Hoſte ----So the *Jews* were won't to *rend* their Clothes at the hearing of *Blaſphemy*.

" Be

" Be *gone* from me thou curſed Thought," *thou Child of the Devil, and Enemy of all Righteouſneſs* ! I deteſt and *defy* thee, thou art none of *mine*, but art *execrable* to me ! my GOD *impute it not* unto me ! my GOD I will *adore* thee ! raiſe now my Adorations of Thee *more* than ever ! I would even *loathe* my own Soul, that the hated *Foe* could think to find any *liking* in me ! my GOD forbid it ! and get thee hence *Satan* !---- So the bleſſed *Apoſtle*, filled with the HOLY GHOST, ſet his Eyes on the Sorcerer *Elymas*, who ſought to *turn away the Deputy from the Faith* ; and ſaid, " *O full of all Subtlety and Miſchief, thou Child of the Devil*, thou *Enemy of all Righteouſneſs* ! *will thou not ceaſe to pervert the right Ways of the LORD* ! Acts xiii. 10.

4. After the Repulſe and *Rejection* of the vile *Temptation*, we may *fortify* our Souls againſt every Return of it, by holy *Reaſonings* and Argument, Meditation and *Prayer*, religious *Diſcourſe*, and ſetting our ſelves to the *immediate Duties* incumbent on us in our preſent State and Circumſtances ; from which we ſhould not ſuffer any *Temptation* to divert us, or keep us.

So when *Job had rebuk'd his Wife*, and ſpoke his *Deteſtation* of her Words ; he then proceeded to give the *Reaſon* of his doing ſo ; ſaying, " *What* ? *ſhall we receive Good from the Hand of the LORD* ? *and ſhall we not receive Evil* ? q. d. " Shall I *curſe GOD* to Day, " becauſe he pleaſes in his *Sovereignty*, or for the *Puniſhment of my Sins*, which have daily made the *Forfeiture* of all the Affluence of *good Things* with which " his Providence had diſtinguiſh'd me, now to *bereave* " me of them ? or be it for the *Trial* Exerciſe and " Increaſe of *his Grace* beſtowed on me, which He may " *prove* and require the *Exerciſe* of as he pleaſes ! or if " He *has prov'd* it in a State of outward *Proſperity* for " ſo many Years together ; ſhall he not now *call me* " to expreſs the ſame *Faith and Love*, Adoration and " Praiſe, Devotedneſs and Subjection in a State of *Humiliation* and *Adverſity* ; *deſtitute, afflicted, tormented* ? I " will lie therefore *ſilent and adoring* before him in the

" *Duſt*

" *Duſt* where his *wiſe* and *holy* and *righteous* PROVIDENCE
" has laid me, and go on to worſhip, " *Naked came I*
" *out of my Mother's Womb, and naked ſhall I return ;*
" *the LORD gave and the LORD has taken ; bleſſed be*
" *the Name of the LORD.* " I will therefore ſtill go
" on to *bleſs*, and call upon my GOD, and the LORD ſhall
" *ſave* me ! He is ſtill the ſame *Good*, gracious and holy
" GOD to me ; and by his Grace I will be the *ſame*
" humble thankful abaſed *Worſhipper* before Him ; truſt-
" ing in Him and waiting on Him for his Salvation :"
" ---As He has had my daily *Thankſgivings* and Praiſes
" in the *Months paſt* wherein the LORD preſerv'd me ;
" when his *Candle* ſhone upon my Head and by his
" *Light* I walked through Darkneſs ; when his *Secret*
" was upon my Tabernacle and my *Children were about*
" *me !* " As I then *ſent and ſanctified* them when the
" Days of their *Feaſting* were gone about, and early
" roſe up in the Morning to offer *Sacrifices* according
" to the *Number* of them all ; ſo Morning and Evening,
" and through the waking *painful* Hours of every Day
" and Night, will I (by his Grace) now ly *adoring my*
" *GOD* in my Sores and Aſhes !---" I then *fear'd for*
" *them* and for my ſelf, and ſaid, " *It may be my Sons*
" *have ſinned* in their Rejoicings *and curſed GOD in their*
" *Hearts* ; (for out of the *Heart* proceed evil *Thoughts*
" *and Blaſphemies*)---- but if it were only I might fear
" my Sons had *neglected* to render unto GOD the *Praiſe*
" *and Glory* of his Mercies as became them ; I there-
" fore fail'd not to offer for 'em my *Burnt-Offerings* :
" ----" And ſhall I now *curſe* HIM, whom I have been
" all my Life *bleſſing* ? becauſe I have neither *Child*
" to offer for, nor a *Sheep* or *Ox* out of my *Thouſands*
" and *Hundreds* to bring unto his *Altar* ; nor *Strength*
" to riſe and go to it *as my exceeding Joy* ? ---- No,
" *Thou* art my *Hope* O *LORD GOD !* thou art my *Truſt*
" from my *Youth !* by *Thee* have I been holden up from
" the *Womb*, my *Praiſe* ſhall be continually of thee !
" I am a *Wonder* unto many, but thou my ſtrong
" *Refuge !* let my Mouth be filled with thy *Praiſe* and
" with thy *Honour* all the Day.

I have put this *Run* of Scripture together, and as it were into the Mouth of tempted *Job*, to aſſiſt *others* when tempted to *hard Thoughts* of the bleſſed GOD, in ſtrengthning and confirming themſelves in their *Adorations* before Him. In much *fewer* Words *Job* ſet the *Temptation* in its true Colours, as moſt unjuſt and *baſe*, ungrateful and *impious*; and what his Soul ſhould *never* come into, GOD helping him; but keep at the greateſt *Diſtance* from it.

It was the SPIRIT and Grace of CHRIST that thus *animated Job* and fill'd his Mouth with *Arguments*; for when JESUS was *himſelf* led by the SPIRIT into the Wilderneſs to be tempted of the *Devil*, he *rebuk'd* the filthy and impudent *Suggeſtions* of *Satan* once and again, by giving his holy and irreſiſtible *Reaſons* from the *Word* of GOD; "*It is written*, ſaid he, and again----*it is written*: So it became *Him* who took our *Nature*, therein to be made *under the Law*, and to *fulfil* it; and whoſe *Glory* it was to ſay "*Thy Law is within me.*

Joſeph was the princely *Type* of CHRIST both in his *reſolute Repulſe* of the *Tempter*, the Devil in his *Miſtreſs*; refuſing to ſee or hear her; and yet *arguing* too *the great Wickedneſs, and Sin againſt GOD*; and alſo the foul *Ingratitude* Injuſtice and Villany to his *Maſter*: And when nothing would do with the impudent *Creature* he *fled*: An *Act* as *heroic* in its Circumſtances, as *David's* facing the *Monſter* of a Man, the *Defier of the Hoſt of GOD.*---- In like manner, when *David* was outrag'd by *Michal* for the *Tranſports of his Devotion*, he bid her think if it were not *grateful* in him to *dance before the LORD* and his *Ark*, who had prefer'd him to her *Father's* Houſe, and made him the *King of Iſrael*; "the devout will *honour me* ſaid he, *and I will be yet more vile than thus, and baſe in my own Eyes.* 1 Sam. v. 22.

In ſhort, *Sin* is never to be *parly'd with*, but at once and reſolutely to be *denied*; yet is it the *Act of Wiſdom* and Grace to *reaſon with our ſelves* for our Confirmation and Eſtabliſhment in juſt and holy Reſolutions; and with *others* for their Reproof and Conviction. The

Holy Scripture is our *Armory* or *Magazine* to ſupply us *with Helmet and Shield, Sword and Buckler,* for our Defence againſt the *Darts of Hell*; and for *Offence* and Wounding to the *Enemy,* who flies before the holy hated WORD. From this *Artillery* diſcharge upon the *Hoſts of Hell,* and they will *flee from you.*

Thus *rebuke* the Tempter and *refuſe* to ſin: and when this is done, *clench* the Denial with the *Word of Truth,* which ſets before you the impious Nature of *Sin,* and the curſed Nature and End of the *Tempter*; our Relation and natural Subjection to GOD and infinite Obligations to Him; his *Laws* Promiſes and Threatnings; and *be* the *Chriſtian fixed in his Poſt, ſtrong in the* LORD and in the *Power of his Might, to withſtand the Wiles of the Devil, and wreſtle againſt Principalities and Powers, the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, and ſpiritual Wickedneſs in high Places:* Think, what is *holy* and righteous, wiſe and good, Duty and Intereſt; and there *fix your Foot,* and *ſtand,* having your *Loins girt about with Truth* and having on *the Breaſtplate of Righteouſneſs.* Commit yourſelf thus to GOD and to the *Word of his Grace, which is able to keep you from falling.*

So far we have ſeen under the *two firſt Propoſitions*; that the *deareſt* Children of GOD may be call'd to *endure* the moſt *foul* and accurſed Annoyances from the *Devil*; which will be unſpeakably *grievous* to them and abhorred, and ought to be infinitely deteſted and inſtantly *rejected* by them.----Yet if they cannot get *rid* of them, as they deſire and *ſtrive* to do, they muſt *beware* of a too *intenſe contending* with them; but *turn away* as from a barking *Dog*, or from an abuſive raving *Scold*, or from a *curſing Shimei.*----As the heavenly Mr. *Janeway* adviſes in this Caſe, "Let not *ſuch Thoughts* have any "Time of *Abode* in your Mind, but *turn 'em out* with "all the *Loathing* and Abhorrence that you can; and "with as *little Trouble and Diſturbance* as you can; or "elſe *it pleaſes the Devil* if he can but make you your "*own Tormentor.*---- *Divert* your Thoughts therefore to "ſomething good and *holy*, and let thoſe very *Injections* be

" be conſtantly the Occaſion of ſome *ſpiritual Medita-*
" *tion*, and *that* the *quite contrary* to the Blaſphemy or
" infidel Suggeſtion : Or fall a *praying* with Earneſt-
" neſs ; and the *Devil* will be *weary* if he finds his *De-*
" *ſigns thus broken* ; and that thoſe *Sparks of Hell* which
" he *ſtrikes* into Souls to *kindle* and *inflame Corruption*, do
" but put *Warmth into Grace*, and ſet Faith and Prayer
" a working : He will be *beat* with his own *Weapon*
when it is *turn'd* upon him, " what he intended as
" *Water* to cool or *quench* your Love to GOD, proves
" like *Oil* to make it *flame* the more vehemently.

I go on now to ſhow in the *laſt* place,

III. That theſe grievous and *abhorred Injections are not the Sin of the dear Saints of GOD*, nor will be *reckoned* ſo by their *holy and gracious GOD* ; nor do they *defile and pollute* their Souls, nor bring them under *Guilt*, when they are deteſted and rejected. This the *Text* is plain and poſitive in, " *In all this Job ſinned not.*

It is *ſtrange* to obſerve the dreadful *Fears* of many *melancholly Chriſtians*, who are *hurried* and diſtreſſed with evil and wicked Thoughts which their Souls abhor ; " That 'tis *altogether* (or very *much*) their *own Wickedneſs* and Guilt ; and they are ready to account and call themſelves the moſt *unbelieving and profane*, the moſt *polluted and vile* of any in the World ; and to think that *none have Hearts* and Minds ſo *alienated from GOD*, and turn'd againſt Him as *theirs* : they *impute* all to themſelves, and think themſelves *twofold* more the Children of *Hell* than others ! ---- Why is it *thus* ? they are ready to *ask*, if there is not a *Fountain of Impurity* in *Me* more than in others, caſting up *ſuch Mire and Dirt* ? Or if the Hand of *Satan* be in the *troubling of the Waters*, yet is it not plain he *finds* all this odious *Filth* at the Bottom in me ? for which I ſhould *abhor* my ſelf and fear leſt GOD abhor me !---And yet verily *GOD ſees not Iniquity*

or Perverſeneſs in them, but is *pleas'd* in the Struggle and *Victory* of *his own Grace* within them.

The Support and *Relief* of ſuch diſtreſſed Souls, and to *convince* them of their *Error*, I had principally in Mind in the Choice of this *Subject*; although I take it not to have been the very *State* of the *Caſe* with *Job*, who was too *intelligent* and eſtabliſh'd a Worſhipper of GOD to be driven from the happy *Confidence* of his *Integrity* and Uprightneſs, by the Aſſaults of *Satan* or by the *Arguments* of his *Friends*: He *appeal'd* from *them* unto GOD the Searcher of the *Heart*, and who knows all Things, that He *knew he loved Him*: Chap. x. ℣.7. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked!* and in his *laſt Reply*, he finiſh'd with a long *Train* of noble *Appeal* to GOD and Affirmations to Men: Chap. xxvii. "As GOD *liveth* who hath ta-"ken away my Judgment, and the ALMIGHTY who hath "vexed my Soul; all the while my *Breath* is in me "and the *Spirit* of GOD is in my Noſtrils; my *Lips* "ſhall not ſpeak Wickedneſs, nor my Tongue utter "*Deceit*: GOD forbid that I ſhould *juſtify* you; "*'till I die I will not deny my Integrity*: My Righte-"ouſneſs I *hold faſt* and will not let it go; my Heart "ſhall *not reproach* me as long as I live.

But alas! how *few* of the dear *Children of GOD* in our Days arrive at like *ſteddy* full *Aſſurance* of Faith as *Job* had, reſpecting their *Integrity!* they are too often *ſoon ſhaken in Mind*; though we are admoniſhed by the HOLY GHOST *not* to be ſo on one Account and another. 2 Theſſ. ii. 2. Even *Miniſters* as well as common *Diſciples* may be too juſtly likened to *Reeds ſhaken with the Wind!* and no wonder, when *Peter* himſelf was ſo eaſily carried away as the dry *Stubble* by a ſudden *Blaſt* of Temptation, in his *Self-Confidence*, and after Warning given him by his LORD.

But what now lies before us, is to affirm and *prove* that there may be the *fouleſt Motions* to Sin, made by *Satan* to the Minds and Hearts of the moſt *ſincere* and *pious* among the People of GOD; as *this* in the *Text* was to *Job*, "*Curſe GOD and die!* and yet if their Soul

abhors

abhors from the curſed Motion, conſent not to it, but deteſt it; it is *not their Sin*, but only *Satan's* :---" in all this *they have not ſinned.*

If we *receive the Witneſs of Man*, the *Witneſs of GOD is greater.* My *Text* is the *Witneſs of GOD* concerning *Job*; and by it the SPIRIT OF GOD witneſſes the ſame concerning *You, O afflicted and toſſed in Spirit and not comforted*; if you are enabled by *Him* to deteſt and eject like *blaſphemous* and diabolical *Injections*, as odious and abominable to you. GOD, the righteous and gracious *Judge*, is then ſo far from beholding this Iniquity *in you*, that on the contrary He will in the great and *laſt Day*, before Men and Devils, in the moſt free and open manner *own accept* and *reward* it as the Power of his *Grace* in You, and an Inſtance of the ſincere *Devotion* of your Souls towards Him *.

But to put this matter yet in a *clearer Light*, and give the utmoſt *Demonſtration* of it, let us again recur to the horrid Motion of the *Devil* to the *Man* CHRIST JESUS our LORD; who was *in all Points tempted as we are, yet without Sin*: Heb. iv. 15. *For we have not a High Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities : let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy and find Grace to help in Time of need.*--- For was not the LORD *of Glory*, the HOLY ONE of GOD annoy'd by *Satan* with as curſed *Suggeſtions* reſpecting the bleſſed GOD, as ever *You* were? and yet *in Him was no Sin.*

---

* *Van Maſtricht* de Suggeſtionibus blaſphemis. " Sunt Tentationes *Satanæ*, quibus Menti etiam pientiſſimorum obtrudit Cogitationes adverſus Majeſtatem DEI, Sufficientiam CHRISTI &c; non eſſe *DEUM*, vel Providentiam particularem; quibus etiam egregii pii exagitantur, ad hoc tantum ut conturbentur, et in Officiis Cultus Divini fatigentur. Sunt quidem in his Suggeſtionibus horrenda Scelera, ſed *nequaquam in tentatis*, quippe qui ab eis abhorrent; ſed in *tentante* ſolo. --- Communis eſt Sors optimorum, hujuſmodi Inſultus *Satanæ* ſuſtinere, quin et ipſius CHRISTI, *Matth.* iv. --- Id a quo ingenue abhorret, et cui fortiter obnititur, non eſſe ſuum Peccatum; quin potius duriſſimam *Crucem*, ſibi portatu longe moleſtiſſimam.

He

He was tempted to a *Diſtruſt* and Disbelief of his FATHER's *Care* & kind Providence; "He lets thee *ſtarve* and "*famiſh*, and caſts thee here, where no *Bread* is to be got; *care* now for thy Self, and if thou art the SON and *Prophet*, the promiſed *Meſſiah*, as thou haſt been declared at thy *Baptiſm*, *command that theſe Stones be made Bread:* q. d. thy FATHER is unnatural and *cruel*, thy Dependance on Him *vain;* thy *Hunger* is natural neceſſary and *innocent* after ſo long Abſtinence and Devotion; Self-preſervation is thy *Duty*, and 'tis a Caſe of *Neceſſity*, and calls thee to go out of the *ordinary* Way for thy Supply.--- But our LORD in effect bid the *Tempter* remember how the *Church* of old had been *fed* in the *Wilderneſs* by the care of his FATHER; nor without *his Bleſſing* could the miraculous Bread *nouriſh* Him.

Again, the Devil's *laſt* Temptation of our SAVIOUR was more *foul* and horrid than the *firſt*: In ſome viſionary Repreſentation of all the *Glories* of the *Kingdoms* of this *World*, he ſet them before Him; and impudently call'd them *all his own*, and told him he would *give 'em all* unto him, if he would *fall down and worſhip him.* What a *Landſkip* is here of the *Devil's* drawing in a Wilderneſs? becoming the *Father of lies* and the Pride of *Lucifer*, with the Subtlety of the *Old Serpent!* and equally impudent his *Claim* and *Promiſe*. May I be permitted to *paraphraſe* the helliſh Suggeſtion: q. d. "You have been led up into "this horrid *Wilderneſs*, and are you not here miſerably "*abandon'd* by Him you call your *Father!* I the *God of* "*this World* appear to ſuccour you! your *Father* has *little* "in it to call his *own*! *Rome* and all the Glories of it are "all mine! this poor *Judea* and the Wilderneſs about it "he may call *his!* My *Idols* fill *Italy* and *Greece*! there I "am *worſhiped* with utmoſt Pomp and Glitter! the Earth "and all its Learning and *Phyloſophy* bows to me! to "Me the *Poets* ſing, and *Ceſar* with all the *Potentates* "are my Votaries: the *Powers* that be are ordained by "me, and their *Dominions* are by *me* diſtributed! to "*whomſoever I will, I give them*! are you not now poor "*deſolate*, empty in your great *Title* the *Son of* GOD! do "you

" you deſerve to be ſo abandon'd! be *mine* and ſee what I " will do for you! this *World* and all its *Glories* ſhall imme- " diately be *yours*! its Rule, its Riches, its Homage and " all its *Worſhip!* render me *only* this ſmall Acknow- " ledgment, this *ſingle* Act of Homage, " *fall down and* " *worſhip me!*

Thus the *evil One*, the *Prince of this World* came firſt with *Flatteries* and Allurements, and afterward with *Rage* and Terrors, with all the *Powers of Darkneſs* ſurrounding our bleſſed LORD, and *found nothing in him*; *for in Him was no Sin.* And if JESUS was thus *tempted*, yet *without Sin*; ſo if any of his dear *Members* are in like Manner tempted, and by his Grace are *kept* from yielding; by his *Power* are enabled to reſiſt and *rebuke* the Temptation, it is by no Means *Sin* in them; but they are *more than Conquerors thro' Him.*

Let us *reaſon* and argue a little on this *Point.*

1. The meer *thinking* on Sin, or the Contemplation of it with *Averſion* of Soul, can by no Means *defile* the Mind. GOD Himſelf *beholds* Sin, *thinks* of it, yet is infinitely *holy*, and of *purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and cannot look on Iniquity.* Hab. i. 13. i. e. He beholds it with *Abhorrence*, his *Soul* hates it, his *Word* forbids, condemns and threatens it. The holy *Angels* alſo ſee our Sins, open and ſecret, conſider and deteſt 'em; are offended at and grieved by them; and it is their *Holineſs.* ----*Good Men* make *diligent Search* and Enquiry into the Nature of *Sin*, their own and others among whom they dwell; diſcern the moral *Evil*, Guilt and Pollution of it; its Turpitude, Baſeneſs and Malignity; yet are they not *defiled* hereby, no but the more *purified* both in Heart and Life.---Regenerate Perſons and ſincere *Penitents* find it abſolutely neceſſary for them often to call their *paſt* Sins to Remembrance; they can neither ſhew themſelves *Men* nor *Chriſtians* without doing ſo, for a renewed *Repentance* on the Account of 'em, to increaſe their *Humiliation* and Abaſement before GOD, to quicken themſelves in the *Mortification* of the Body of Sin and Death which they carry about with them, to fix their

Ab-

Abhorrence of it and of themſelves for it, and to ſtrengthen their *Watch* againſt every Motion to it, from within or from without;----but all this is according to *Godlineſs*, and *purifying* to the Soul in *obeying the Truth.*----Now it is the ſame Thing in the Event, thro' the *Grace of GOD* with and in his *Saints*, if vile and wicked Thoughts ariſe *involuntarily* in 'em, or are thrown and caſt in upon them by *Satan* without and againſt their Will: If the Soul in either Caſe riſe againſt them in *Fear*, in Mourning, in Hatred and *loathing* of them; Iniquity is but *purged away* hereby, and the Soul *confirmed* in holy Diſpoſition, and the *Habit* of Grace is ſtrengthned. As if you *rinſe* a very foul Veſſel, though it be in *dirty* Water, yet it will be ſomething the *cleaner* for it; the *Dirt* at the Bottom will be in Part (at leaſt) looſned, and caſt out with the Water; ſo here, though the Injection of *Satan* be never ſo unclean and defiling in it ſelf, yet the Soul *ſpuing out* the foul Thought, *caſts up* alſo ſomething further of its natural Impurity together with it.

Indeed there is a Contemplation or *thinking* of Sin that is moſt *impure* and defiling: To think of it with *liking* and Complacency or Deſire is highly ſo; to *crave*, intend, and project it, to muſe and dwell on it with Pleaſure, to *roll it as a ſweet Morſel under our Tongue* with Taſte and Reliſh; to recollect it with Delight and *chaw* it over again as the *Cud*, (which is to *injure* the wholſome Property of the *clean* Creatures) this is to *liſten* to the Tempter with Inclination and Conſent, and call the forbidden Fruit *good* for Sight and Taſte, and is *groſly* polluting to the Soul; as alſo in a *Degree* it is, not to have our Hearts *riſe againſt*, and *fly from* every Motion within us to known Sin. For in this Caſe *Luſt lodges*, is *harbour'd* and entertained, *conceives* and brings forth; and is ſo much *real* Adultery, Murder, Profaneſs of the Heart: Matth. v. 12. But on the contrary, to think of *Sin* with Grief and *Mourning*, Fear and Confuſion, Indignation and Rejection, this is *purgative* and purifying, *wholſome* and healthful, *medicinal* and reſtorative,

reſtorative, nouriſhing and *ſtrengthning* to a *Principle of Grace*, in *Act* and Exerciſe.

2. Let it be moreover conſider'd, that the very *Argument* I am upon *ſuppoſes* the abhorred deteſted Thoughts *injected by another*, and that they do *not come* or proceed from the *Soul it ſelf*, nor are originally its *own*, and that the Soul is *grieved* by 'em, *offended* at 'em, *diſowns* and rejects 'em: they are therefore ſome *ſpurious Births* from abroad, laid *ſecretly* and baſely at our *Door*, or within it, and *falſly father'd on us*, if we are *ſo fooliſh* as to receive and *own* them. If we conſent not, 'tis only the *Devil's Sin*; his Act, his Guilt and he muſt anſwer for it. If for Inſtance, the firſt *Adam* had done as the SECOND did; if our *firſt* Parents, had *rebuk'd* the Tempter and *deteſted* his Motion to them, when he perſuaded them to *diſbelieve* and diſobey GOD; the *Sin* had reſted only on the *Devil*; they had remained *innocent* and been *confirm'd* in Holineſs; but they *yeilded* to his curſed Suggeſtion, took *part* in his Act and in his *Apoſtacy* from GOD.

Indeed, now in our *fallen* State we have juſt *Reaſon* to ſuſpect our Selves and *fear always*, ſometimes *more* than at other, whether the vile *Motions* to Sin within us be not from our *own Hearts*, *which are deceitful above all things* and deſperately wicked; *who can know them?* No wonder therefore if the *holieſt* Child or Servant of GOD be ſometimes ready to ſay, "I fear it is *Sin dwell-*" *ing* and reigning in me, and the Hand of the *Devil* is "it may be *little* in it; for as St. *James* ſays "*Every* "*Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Luſt* "*and enticed*: and how ſhall I *know* but that it is *thus* with "me?

But let us call in the *Aid* of the bleſſed St. *Paul* to ſet this matter in its true Light; and it is well for the *Church* that it has theſe *two Apoſtles* to give Light into each others Meaning. In the vii. *Chap.* to the *Romans*, "the *Apoſtle* gives a Deſcription of the *Conflict between Grace and Corruption* which he experienced in *himſelf!* and no doubt but every *renewed* ſanctified Soul has more or leſs the *like* Experience. The *Apoſtle* calls himſelf

carnal and ſold under Sin, becauſe he at Times did that which he *allowed not*, but truly *hated*: but his Support and *Relief* was, "that it was *no more He that did it, but* "*Sin that dwelt in him*: for, the *Good* that he *would* he "too often did *not*, but the *Evil* that he would not, that "he *did*: Now (ſays he again) if I *do* that I *would not*, "it is no more *I* that do it, but *Sin* that dwelleth in "me: He goes on, I find then a *Law* that when I "*would do good, Evil is preſent* with me: For I *delight* "in the *Law of GOD* after the *inward Man*; but I ſee "*another Law* in my Members *warring againſt* the Law "of my *Mind*, and bringing me into *Captivity* to the "Law of Sin! O *wretched Man* that I am, who ſhall "*deliver me from the Body of this Death*?---The like ſpiritual *Conflict* and *luſting* of the *Fleſh* againſt the *Spirit*, and of the *Spirit againſt the Fleſh*, was found in the *Chriſtians* at *Galatia*, ſo that *they could not do the Things that they would*. Gal. v. 17.

We ſee here that a *good Man* may have this *Rejoicing*, "the Teſtimony of his *Conſcience* to his *Complacen*-"*cy* in the *Law* of GOD, and that his higheſt *Pleaſure* "in Life is, when *Heart and Life* are in the ſtricteſt "Conformity to the Law and *Will of GOD*; and that "with *his Mind* he is *ſerving the Law of GOD*; and yet "at Times, *hold himſelf* no better than one brought into "*Captivity* to the Law of *Sin*, a *carnal Creature, and ſold* "*under* it: And yet he muſt *not impute* to his *own Will* and allowance the *Evils* which he *bewails*, *groans* out under, *ſtrives* againſt and *hates* himſelf for. To this *he* muſt recur, "It is *no more I* that do it, but *Sin* which dwelleth in me; a *Body of Death* which I am hourly *groaning* for a *full* Deliverance from.---It is the Experience and *Confeſſion* of the *holieſt Saints* on Earth, that there are ſad *Remains of Impurity* and Uncleanneſs cleaving to them; the *Filthineſs both of Fleſh and Spirit*, which are *defiling* to their beſt *Frames* and Duties; and too often *luſting* ſtrongly and at Times *prevalently*; ſo that the *Good* which they *deſire* to do they too often *do not*, and the *Evil* which they *wou'd not* they at Times

do:

do : Their *Souls delight in GOD, after the inward Man*, but yet they *find another Law*, Power or Principle of *Corruption, warring* againſt the *Law of GOD* and the *Law* that *bears Rule* in their Minds.--- Now ſuppoſe this *carnal* Principle (*mortified* but not yet *ſlain* and extinguiſhed) *luſts* and tempts to *blaſphemous* and diabolical Tho'ts of it *ſelf* alone or by the Inſtigation of *Satan* ; and at the ſame Time ſuppoſe the *ſanctified Spirit luſting againſt theſe helliſh Motions*, and *groaning within it ſelf for Deliverance* from them, and *Victory* over 'em ; ready to *abhor it ſelf* on the Account of them, and *crying out* of its *own* Captivity and *Bondage*,---- we may be then *aſſured*, that whatever be the *Riſe* of the curſed Temptation ; be it from *Job*'s own corrupt *Nature*, or from his *Wife*, or from his *Adverſary the Devil* ; it is not at all his *own Sin* and Act ; it is *no more He that does it*, though it may be from *Sin that dwelleth in him* ; Sin which he *allows not*, Sin which he is daily labouring to *mortify*, and from which he is earneſtly *ſeeking* Deliverance.

In ſhort, All *Sin* is voluntary ; the *Will* is in it, the *Choice* is of it, the Soul *likes* it, and hence *Guilt* ariſes. ----- All that I ſhall further *add* on this Argument, to carry it to the utmoſt *Evidence* and Demonſtration, is

3. There is not only *no Sin*, but *much Vertue* ; a notable Exerciſe of *Grace*, and *Victory* over Temptation, in the *Caſe* ſuppoſed ; when *blaſphemous* Tho'ts ariſing in us, or violently ſuggeſted to us, are *abhorred* by us, deteſted and *rejected*. Violent Temptations to hideous Sin are hereby reſiſted, refuſed and *overcome* : And how *far* is this from the committing Sin, or *contracting Guilt* ? GOD, the righteous *Judge* reckon'd it to *Job* for *Righteouſneſs*, and his *Triumph over Satan* ; *ſtill he holdeth faſt his Integrity ! although thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without a Cauſe.*

" This added to his *Character*, (ſays Mr. *Henry* on " the Place) turn'd to his *Praiſe and Glory !* GOD him- " ſelf ſpeaks of it with a kind of Pleaſure and *Wonder*, " and of *Triumph* in the Power of his own *Grace* ! He " ſtands the *faſter*, and *holds* the faſter, for being ſhaken !

" *ſtill* he does ſo ; after ſo *violent* an Aſſault upon him ! " he has *got Ground* inſtead of loſing any ! his *Conſtancy* " ſhows proves and *crowns* his Integrity ! He is more " hearty and *lively* than ever in *bleſſing Me.*

Thus *Job* approv'd himſelf the perfect and *upright Man,* one that feared GOD and *eſchewed Evil* ; and that there was *none like him* on the Earth : None *tried,* tempted and afflicted like him in his Day, or ſince among meer Men, or that *bore* Temptations of like Kind and Degree, ſo many and great, with like *Heroic* Piety and Fortitude. ---- The *Tempter* could not but own himſelf *beat,* and GOD *juſtified* in all that He had ſaid of his penitent, patient, believing faithful *Servant.*

GOD meant and allow'd the *Trial,* that it might ſtand on *Record* for the Comfort of his *tempted Saints,* and for the Edification of his *Church* for ever. It is a *Banner diſplay'd* for others to *fight* under, in the Cauſe of *Truth* and Holineſs, to the End of the World. *Job* has help'd many a weak and ſtrong *Believer* to beat the Devil again and again, down to our own Days. He ſtill *ſits as a King in the Army* ; and *what Hoſts* of ſuffering Saints are *ſtill fighting* under and after him, and conquering by *Faith in his* REDEEMER.

And by every Fight and *Victory* they certainly get ſome further *Strength* and Power againſt Sin, and *Confirmation* in Grace ; even as *the Teſtimony of* CHRIST *was confirmed* in the *Corinthians,* and they *confirmed to the End ;* that they might be *blameleſs in the Day of* CHRIST : 1 Cor. i. 6, 8. *Satan* alſo is more and more *bruiſed under the Feet* of GOD's People ; and like the conquering *Iſraelites* they will be *call'd by* JESUS to ſet their *Feet* on the *Necks* of the *Principalities and Powers of Darkneſs* ; and the *Promiſes* of both *Teſtaments* will be fulfilled to them and in them ; " *thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion and the Adder ; on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the Power of the Enemy,* Pſal. xci. Luk. x. So *Light is ſowing for the righteous,* in the Hours of greateſt *Darkneſs* ; and the humble *Diſciples of* JESUS will one Day like the *Seventy* return with *Joy* to Him, ſaying, " LORD, *even*

the

the Devils are ſubject to us thro' thy Name!---- And he ſaid to them, " *I beheld Satan as Lightning fall from Heaven!* and in *this* rejoice, " *that your Names are written in Heaven.*

The Day is coming when *the Saints ſhall judge the World, ſhall judge Angels!* Then they ſhall ſee *their Enemy*, the *Old Serpent*, the *Devil and Satan* at the *Bar* of CHRIST their *Saviour*, and *damn'd* and caſt into the *Lake of Fire!* Then having follow'd CHRIST in the *Regeneration* they ſhall *ſit down with him on his Throne!* Then having drank of *his Cup* and been baptized with *his Baptiſm*, they ſhall ſit on his *right Hand* and on his *left* in his Kingdom!---- Let 'em realize now by *Faith* how full will be their *Joy*, how bright their *Glory*, how high their Honour, how *wide* their *Fame* and *Renown* in that illuſtrious *Day!* They *Conquerors* and *more* than Conquerors! and ſo their *Triumphs* more than *Auguſt* or *Roman*; Divine, Cœleſtial and Eternal!---- Wherefore " my beloved *Brethren*, count it *all Joy* when ye fall " into diverſe *Temptations*, yea the moſt *fiery* Trials; " for bleſſed is the Man that *endureth* them; for when " he is *tried* he ſhall receive the *Crown of Life*, which " the LORD hath *promiſed* to them that love Him: But " let *Patience* have its *perfect* Work, that ye may be " perfect and *entire* wanting nothing." *James* i. 2, 3, " 4, 12.

I cloſe with ſome Words of the very Reverend and pious Dr. *Horneck* on this Argument: " *Unallowed* " *blaſphemous* and other *wicked* Thoughts in the Heart " *do not defile it*: This *Doctrine* muſt be often incul- " cated, becauſe of the great Number of *pious Souls* who " look upon themſelves as the *vileſt Wretches* in the " World, and are ready to run into *Deſperation*, becauſe " ſo many *horrid* Tho'ts and *filthy* Suggeſtions preſent " themſelves to their Minds; more eſpecially diſturb- " ing them in their *Devotions* and religious Exerciſes: " But not being *allow'd* of, nor *conſented* to; however " dreadful and *hainous* they are in themſelves, they *no* " *more defile the Heart* than *boiſterous Winds*, and the

" *Commotion*

" *Commotion* of the Water ſully the *Pearls* that ly at the " Bottom. ---- That they are not their *own* Tho'ts is " evident, becauſe their *Will* is contrary to them, their " Underſtanding is convinced of the Iniquity of them, " and their Hearts *Deſire* is to be rid of 'em. The *Soul* " in this Caſe is like the *young Men in the fiery Furnace* ; " while a thouſand *Sparks* fly about them, not a hair of " their Head is ſinged.

To have done, ---- In every *Congregation* almoſt there are ſome whoſe *Caſe* this is : Some are *known* to us, and there may be others : To *all ſuch* I have bro't the *Mind* of GOD and they muſt make *Conſcience* of receiving it as *from Him* : Wherefore *comfort* your ſelves together, and *edify* one another : *Comfort the Feeble-minded, and ſupport the Weak* : *And the very* GOD *of Peace ſanctify you wholly* ; *and I pray GOD your whole Spirit Soul and Body be preſerved blameleſs unto the Coming of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST : *Faithful is He that calleth you, who alſo will do it. Amen.*

Having thus in ſome poor manner and meaſure endeavoured to ſhow, that the moſt *pious* and gracious Perſons in the *Church* of GOD on Earth, may be *annoyed* with moſt accurſed *hideous* Tho'ts and Suggeſtions againſt the Bleſſed GOD, his Truths and Laws ; which ought to be and will be very *grievous* to and *abhorr'd* by them, and ſhould be *rejected* inſtantly with *Deteſtation*, or rather with a *holy Diſdain* and Contempt ; and that when they are ſo they are *not our Sin*, and will never be *reckon'd* againſt us as our Sin by GOD our righteous and gracious JUDGE ; and that not only is there *no Sin* in this Caſe committed by the grieved and *diſtreſſed* Soul, flying to CHRIST for *Refuge* and Protection ; but indeed there is the *true Exerciſe of Grace* and *Victory* over Sin ; *true Grace* is tried, proved, diſplay'd and triumphant before the Eyes of the *inviſible Hoſts* and Armies of the *Living GOD*, as really as *David*

David triumph'd in the Sight of *all Iſrael* when the horrid blaſpheming *Giant* fell dead before his Faith, and the *Philiſtine Army* took to their Heels and fled ; and we ſhould *learn* of the timerous, affrighted *Iſraelites* to *ſhout* and purſue the flying Enemy.

I proceed therefore to the USE and IMPROVEMENT of the Subject ; and though the *principal* Part thereof muſt be to *relieve* and *direct* (by the Will of GOD) *diſtreſſed Souls* under the Annoyances of *Hell* ; yet there being alſo many weighty *Inferences* that offer to us by Way of *Inſtruction*, *Caution*, *Conviction*, *Counſel* and *Direction*, as well as of Support and *Comfort* to the Soul that is *tempted* and weary ; I ſhall take *thoſe* in my Way alſo.

I. Firſt then by Way of *Inference* and *Inſtruction*, I ſhall recollect and mention ſome *Truths* of great Importance, naturally *flowing* from what has been already ſaid, and indeed all along *implied* and ſuppoſed therein :

As, 1. The *curſed Nature of Sin*, the *hideous Fruit* of the Creature's *Apoſtacy* from GOD ; and the *Malignity* againſt Him that is in our *corrupt Nature* : We may here take a near and full *View* of the deformed *Face*, the odious and filthy *Features* of SIN ; as it *luſts in us* againſt the bleſſed GOD ; and to what a *Degree* it would exceed, if the *Word*, SPIRIT and Grace of GOD did not *reſtrain* and prevent it.

For, are there then the *Seeds* of this *Atheiſm and Blaſphemy* and Rage againſt GOD in us, if he ſhould *leave* us to our ſelves, or deliver us up to *Satan* to ſift us ? Are our *Hearts ſo evil* as to have the leaſt Propenſity to ſuch deteſtable *Impieties* ? Can *Satan* ſee it poſſible to bring us into them ? Does he know us to be ſo *wicked* as to hope to ſucceed againſt us in ſuch barefac'd and horrid Profaneſs ? What ? even to be as vile and foul as *Himſelf* already ? That all his own *ſpiritual Wickedneſſes*, and the Filthineſs of Hell, may be already in us, while here in the Body ? even to *curſe GOD* before a Soul is actually got into the Place of *Deſpair* and Torment ?

Where

Where *only* (one would think) ſuch a Thing can be imagined as a *blaſpheming* becauſe of their *Plagues !* ---- If *Sin* tends even to *this* here on Earth ; or if it has ever turn'd Angels and Men into ſuch *Devils ;* into the worſt and *laſt* Degrees of ſuch Malignity againſt the moſt good, moſt holy perfect and bleſſed GOD ; the Author of all *Being* Perfection and Bleſſedneſs ; ---- O what an Evil is it ? Of what a filthy Nature and what a *Sty* of Pollution ?----Ah, *whither* are we fallen ? Into what a *Mire* have we ſunk ? For what *Shame* have we chang'd our Glory ?----And conſequently, what Humiliation, what Mourning, Self-loathing and Abhorrence, what Fear and *Jealouſy* for our ſelves does our fallen State call for ? We ſhould heavily bear the Senſe of *Original Sin*, our Conception in Sin, our corrupt Nature, the *Plague* of our own Hearts, the *Leproſy* and Defilement of our Souls, their *Guilt* and Wound.

Well may ſuch a filthy *Nature* render us from our *Birth*, the *Children of Wrath !* And never ſhould we *confeſs* our Sins to GOD, but firſt we ſhould *bewail this Spring* and Source of them ! Firſt let us ſeek the Pardon of *this*, and beg for a *Renovation* in the Spirit of our Minds, a Change of Heart, a *new Nature !* That we may be purified and made clean, *ſanctified thro' out in Body Soul and Spirit* : Pſalm li. 5, 10. *Behold I was ſhapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me ! create in me a clean Heart, O GOD ; and renew a right Spirit within me ! caſt me not away from thy Preſence !*---- Well might the *Apoſtle* groan to be deliver'd from the *Body of Sin and Death ! O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me* ?

2. Are very *good* People at Times annoy'd with curſed and *diabolical* Suggeſtions, which they *deteſt* and yet find it hard to *free* themſelves from ? This may convince us that there is a *Devil*, and of what a curſed *Nature* he is, how *hateful* he ſhould be to us ; his *Guilt* alſo, and how great his *Damnation* will at laſt be.---Theſe Things I put together, becauſe of their *Affinity* ; yet

are

are they *diſtinct* Inferences, and to be briefly ſpoken to *each* by themſelves.

1. Doubtleſs there is a *Devil*; a *Tempter* of a moſt accurſed Nature; the Exciter of theſe hated *Tho'ts* which *haunt* at times ſome of the dear Children of GOD, and grievouſly diſtreſs and terrify 'em; unavoidably riſing in their Minds, as if the Blaſphemy where *whiſper'd* in their Ear and urg'd upon them. Not that the Devil *knows* our Tho'ts always, tho' he may ſhrewdly *gueſs* at 'em; nor can he make us think or hinder our thinking as he *will*; nor in any Manner or Degree but as he is *permitted*: Never the leſs that there are wicked, lying, profane, ſpiteful *Spirits* that do find a near *Acceſs* to the Minds of godly Perſons, and have *Pleaſure* in worrying and tormenting them, has been by many ſadly experienc'd.---It's true that this is the Lot of *ſome* only, and thoſe ordinarily more or leſs ſubject to Fear and *Melancholly*: but then it is to be conſidered alſo, that GOD *permits not* the Devil to perſecute *whom* or *when* he pleaſes after this hideous Manner, as he could not come at *Job* 'till GOD gave him Permiſſion; and that ſuch Kind of Annoyances will preſently make Perſons *ſad* and melancholly; for what is more *dejecting* in itſelf? The *Devil* alſo may doubtleſs diſcern when and where there is moſt Likelihood of *ſucceeding* in his Temptations of one *kind* and of another, and apply them accordingly: He perſecutes the more ſoft and *timorous* Temper with *black* and groſs Suggeſtions, while he ſeldom tempts the *ſanguine* free and gay Minds to Melancholly; no, but to licentious Airs and careleſs Jollity: he fiſhes with the *Bait* that is likelieſt to *take* with the Conſtitution of Nature, the Circumſtances of Life; or with the alter'd *Frame* of Perſons under the *Changes* that paſs over them.---- But to return,

One Proof of a *Devil*, or malignant Nature imploying it ſelf againſt GOD, is had in the inward *Perſecutions* that piouſly diſpoſed Minds are made to ſuffer in *vile* and odious Tho'ts, which they reſiſt, cry out of, and fly from, but can't rid themſelves of. Here is *Satan* as

plainly to ſome ſuffering Souls, and unto them that are made acquainted with their Diſtreſſes, as his bodily *Poſſeſſions* have been frequently undoubted, where the *poſſeſſed* have been agitated, rent and torn by him, in horrible Manner, in the Sight of others.

That there is a GOD we know by *his Works*, and that He is a moſt wiſe, powerful and infinitely *good* BEING; becauſe theſe his *Divine Perfections* do glorioufly appear in them: In like manner that there is a *Devil*, or Spiritual *Wickedneſſes* in high Places, is evident and notorious from many palpable *Effects*, which prove him a Being *apoſtate*; baſe, envious, malicious, cruel, outrageous againſt GOD and *Goodneſs*.---The Temptations to *Sin* which we feel our *ſelves*, and ſee the *World* of Mankind carried away with, and hear the *Good* and Virtuous groan under the Annoyance of, are a ſufficient Proof of a World of *Devils*, that like cunning *Serpents*, or roaring *Lions* are *lurking* or *walking* about, to bite and devour.

This was ſo palpable to the *Heathen* World, that many of them came into the Imagination of *two* Principles; the One of all *Good*, the other of all *Evil*; and they ignorantly worſhip'd the *One* with Love and Veneration, the *other* with Dread and Horror: But Reaſon and *Revelation* has baniſhed this ridiculous and inconſiſtent Thought from the *Chriſtian* World; the Word and Works of GOD concurring in this plain Account of *Him*, that HE the *firſt Cauſe* of all Things is neceſſarily and infinitely *good*; and that *Evil* is only from the Creatures *Apoſtacy* and Rebellion againſt GOD, Oppoſition to his *Will* and Enmity againſt it: For there needs only a *Deflexion* from what is *good* and right, to make *Sin* and Evil.

We find therefore ſome apoſtate *Intelligences*, beſid our own wicked Hearts, ſuggeſting Evil to us, and perſwading to it with Importunity and Vehemence, and ſometimes with Violence and Virulence, even to our *own* Horror and Loathing at Times (evil and wicked as we are) and to our exquiſite Pain and Anguiſh; and what can we impute *this* to but a *Devil*? Or what can

we

we infer from it but the Being of ſuch a *curſed Spirit*, the Enemy of GOD's Glory and of our Holineſs and Happineſs.

This Argument I find in *Zanchius*,† Whence are thoſe evil and *impious Thoughts* and Motions forcing in upon us? not from our *ſelves*, for they are againſt our *Wills*; not from GOD or *good Angels* becauſe they are ſo *wicked*; therefore they muſt be from *Satan*; ſome inviſible *Evil One*, even fuller of explicit Spite and Rancour againſt GOD and Holineſs than our *own* corrupt Hearts appear.

To uſe the Words of the Venerable and judicious Mr. *Baxter* here,---- "*Temptations* (ſays he) are ſome- "times ſo *unnatural*, ſo importunate and violent, that "the *Perſon* tempted even feels ſomething without "himſelf, perſwading and urging him: He can nei- "ther be *alone*, nor go about his *Calling*, but he is fol- "low'd and *dog'd* with earneſt Motions to Sin; and "unto *Sins* too to which he never found himſelf in- "clin'd; Sins which he has no Pleaſure in, nor Proſ- "pect from; Sins that are quite againſt the Tempera- "ture of his Body, and the Deſire of his Mind. ---- Truly, a *Mind thus perſecuted* will need no *Argument* ſcarce, beſide its own *Senſe* and Experience, to ſatisfy it "that there is a *Devil*, its *Adverſary*, which deſires his Annoyance, Defilement, Damnation.

2. From hence likewiſe it appears, what a *hateful Spirit* the Devil is; and how abhorr'd and abominable he ſhould be to us; how loath'd and fear'd and deteſted by us.----What juſt *Cauſe* does he give us to *hate* him, if this be his Rage and Malice againſt us? or much rather if he move us thus at any time againſt the Bleſſed GOD! would have us blaſpheme HIM, *curſe* him, and entertain odious Thoughts of Him! ---- *curſed Spirit*, a Hater of GOD, and hated by GOD, ---- ſhould not *we*

† Unde hæ malæ, *invitæ* Cogitationes? Non a *Nobis* quia invitæ; non a *Deo* neq; bonis Angelis, quia malæ; ergo *a Diabolis*.

hate

hate him ? Pſal. cxxxix. ult. " *Do I not hate them, O LORD, that hate Thee* ? And am I *not grieved with them that riſe up againſt Thee* ? *I hate them with perfect Hatred, I count them mine Enemies.* We can have no other Idea of a *Devil*, as ſuch, but as moſt *odious* and accurſed ! And the more ſtrongly *Grace* is rooted, and *Goodneſs* ruling in us, the *more* muſt he be an *Execration* to us. *Hatred* was made for ſuch an Object, as much as *Love* for GOD moſt good and holy.

More eſpecially how ſhould *we* hate to be *our ſelves* like unto ſuch an *odious* Creature as *Satan !* or to be under his Power, poſſeſſed and acted by him, or obedient to him ! of ſuch a *Father*, the *Devil, doing his Luſts !* how ſhould this make us abhor our own *Souls*, our own Being ! for how odious muſt we then be to the bleſſed GOD ! how accurſed in the Sight of HIM that made us in his *own Likeneſs* and Love. Look into the *Word* of GOD, and ſee the foul Face in that *Glaſs* ; " thou *Child of the Devil*, as truly as *Elimas the Sorcerer* was before thee ! And of that *wicked One*, as much as *Cain* who ſlew his Brother, and went out *blaſted* from the Preſence of GOD ! His *Servants* we are to whom we obey, led *Captive* by him at his Will ; the miſerable *Prey* of the *Lion* or *Dragon* of Hell ; the forlorn *Spoil* of the Powers of Darkneſs ! What a *Shame* and Reproach is this to *Human* Nature ! To *Men* made but little lower than the *Angels of Light*, and for *Angelic* Perfection and Felicity among them !----but how are we fallen by Sin, into the Hands of *Devils*, into the *Mire* of their Priſon, in *Chains* under Darkneſs !---Here is Bondage and Slavery abjectly *choſen*, and continued in ! as if Sinners could *love their Maſters, and would not go free* ; altho' the SON OF GOD has come down from Heaven ; and even *died*, as well as *beſought* them, to make them *free*.

It is true that *no Man* can be truly ſaid to *love the Devil* ; and the more Sinners come to *know* of him the more they muſt *hate* him ; and *mutual* everlaſting *Hatred* between them and Devils in *Hell* will be one Part of their eternal *Torment* : But Multitudes love his Luſts,

and

and wear his inglorious *Chains* with Mirth and Pleaſure; yea ſome count 'em their *Ornaments*, like true *Hottentots* in the viſible Kingdom of GOD. The *Devil* is worſhipped and ſerv'd in the *dark Places* of the Earth out of groſs Ignorance and *Fear*; but by Multitudes under the Light of the Goſpel from *liking* to his Motions, in all the *Filthineſſes* both of *Fleſh and Spirit*: A practical Love they ſhow to their deadly *Enemy*, and they hate their *Friend*, their *Father*, their *Redeemer*, *the Holy One of GOD*!----It would be a good *Step* in Religion to *hate* the Devil! how few of the Sons and Daughters of *Men* do it in Truth, whatever they may think! It is the Property of *Grace*, and no ſmall Part of our Chriſtian *Bond* by our *Baptiſm*, to renounce the *Devil* and all his Works; yea to hate his *Likeneſs* in our ſelves or others; to *mourn* and bewail it in *our ſelves*, and behold it in *Tranſgreſſors* and be *grieved*. The Act of Renunciation and *Abjuration* in our *Baptiſm* ſhould be remember'd by us, *repeated* and confirmed every Day we live: This is our *Allegiance* and Fidelity to GOD our KING, and this is the *Liberty of the Sons of GOD*, the *glorious Liberty* which we are called into by the *Goſpel*. Moreover, we muſt infer

3. The *Devil's* great *Guilt* and the Greatneſs of his *Damnation* at the laſt, from his being the *Seducer of Men* into Sin, *Apoſtacy* from GOD and *Rebellion* againſt Him; and from his *perſiſting* in his Attempts againſt the *Children of GOD* unto this Day, with *like* Enmity, Falſhood and Malice, as he tempted *Adam* the *Son of GOD* in Paradiſe.----As he there *belied* GOD and beguiled *Eve*, ſo he belies GOD ſtill, and would terrify penitent and believing Souls into unjuſt and *hard* Thoughts of Him; even the moſt *vile* and accurſed that can be; in Defiance of all that he hath *ſaid* to us in his *Word*. It is his Hatred of GOD, more than of us, that accounts for all this. His *Envy* is of GOD's Glory, his *Malice* againſt the *Work of GOD*! This gives the *Glare of Hell* in them. Indeed the *Blood of Souls* alone is a *Scarlet and Crimſon die*, but the deeper *Stain* is the *lying againſt the* HOLY GHOST, whoſe *Holineſs* he hates, declares *War* againſt

againſt and *defies*. He makes War with the LAMB and his *Members* ; is bruiſing the *Heel* of the SON OF GOD in them to this Day, although he has ſo long ſince ſeen Him *aſcended* onHigh, *leading Captivity Captive* : He wars even *in Heaven* againſt *Michael* and his Angels ! The *Dragon fights* though he knows that he can never *conquer*, and that the *Time of his Torment* is coming on ! he blaſphemes GOD, deceives the *Nations*, accuſes the *Brethren*, perſecutes the *Woman and her Seed*, the *Church* ; and caſts out his *Floods to drown* her ſpiritual *Seed* ; and all becauſe they *keep* the Commandments of GOD and the *Teſtimony of* JESUS ! But his *Judgment* is coming on and the *Serpent's Head* will be then utterly *cruſh'd* : even at the *ſecond* Appearing of the SON OF MAN with Power and great Glory ; when the *Devil and his Angels* ſhall be judged by the LORD and his *Saints* ; who will deſtroy him by the *Breath* of his Mouth and by the *Brightneſs* of his Coming. But previous alſo to this *final* Judgment, will the *Angel of* JESUS come down with *the Key of the bottomleſs Pit and a great Chain in his Hand, and lay hold on the Dragon, the Devil and Satan, and bind him and ſhut him up for a thouſand Years*. Rev. xx. 1, 2. At the *Expiration* of which, to ſhew himſelf a *true Devil* ſtill, as ſoon as *looſed* he will return to his *deceiving the Nations*, and gathering *Gog and Magog* together againſt the *Camp of the Saints* ; which will be the filling up his *Meaſure*, and then *Death and Hell*, the *Deceiver* and *damned Ghoſts* together, ſhall be caſt into the *Lake of Fire*, which is the *ſecond Death*, ℣. 10, 14.

Surely it muſt *needs* be thus : The *Arch-Sinner* and *firſt* in Revolt from GOD, and the *inveterate* Enemy, ſhall leaſt of all *eſcape* the Divine Vengeance : The *Saints ſhall judge Angels* : *They* ſhall ſee their *Adverſary* and Tempter brought forth in Chains before the *Bar* of CHRIST, around whoſe Throne they ſhall ſtand ; they ſhall hear him arraigned, convicted and *damned* from the Mouth of the glorious MAN, JESUS CHRIST ; for his *firſt* malicious Seduction of our *firſt Parents*, and for all his Endeavours *ſince* to maintain and increaſe our *Apoſtacy* ;

The

The Guilts of *Mankind* will be *laid* upon him ; a heavy *Load !* his Spite againſt the SAVIOUR and *all* whom the FATHER gave to him ! his *Impotent* Blaſphemies and his *prevalent* Sollicitations will all come into *one Account*, and be *revenged* together in his Condemnation : The *Saints* ſhall ſee the Judgment *executed*, and ſing together with a loud *Acclamation*, " Thrice holy, juſt and true ! now " is come Salvation and Strength, the Kingdom of our " GOD, and the Power of his CHRIST.

Let me *illuſtrate* the Matter a little from the Wickedneſs and tragic End of *Haman*, and the Salvation, Joy and Gladneſs thence ariſing to the *Jews :* That vile enormous *Power, Haman*, in his *Luciferian* Pride, Envy and Rage, murderouſly plotted, and almoſt compaſſed, the Deſtruction of the *captiv'd Church* : The good Queen *Eſther* petition'd in her Fear and Anguiſh for *her Life* and the Life of her *People* ; for alas ! they were *ſold in* the Intention of the *Evil One*, to be deſtroy'd, *to be ſlain and to periſh !* But in the End, confounded with Guilt and ſpeechleſs, *Haman* is doom'd and dragg'd to the *Gallows*, which he had prepar'd for *Mordecai the Jew*, after he had juſt liv'd to ſee him *exalted*, crowned and triumphing ! his *Aſſociates* in the plotted Deſtruction fell with him under a dreadful Vengeance ; and thence was the *Church's* Salvation and Triumph perfected ! *Eſther reign'd*, *Mordecai* went out from the Preſence of the *King* in *royal Apparel*, and the *Jews* had Light and Gladneſs Joy, and Honour.---So when the *Grand Enemy of the Saints* is bro't to the *Bar of* CHRIST, in the Judgment of the *great Day*, they will riſe up and ſay----"*This* LORD *is the Adverſary and wicked One !* And then the abject *Devil* would moſt gladly *fall* at the *leaſt Saint's Foot* to beg for his Life ! Whoſe *Triumph* will be high and glorious as the *Devil* is led away to his Eternal *Torments*.---His *Damnation* will be then great, as are now his *Blaſphemies* againſt GOD, and his *Spite* at all his Saints.

This is the *ſecond* Inference, ---- there is a *Devil ;* a *Hoſt* of accurſed Spirits, of a moſt curſed Diſpoſition, under hideous Guilts, and reſerved to a dreadful Damnation.

nation. O let us *fear* his Malice, and *reſiſt* his Temptations, that we may never *partake* in his *Torments*, the *devouring Fire and everlaſting Burnings*, *prepared for him.*

3. Is there a *Devil*, a Hoſt of *evil* Spirits of ſuch a curſed *Diſpoſition*, and implacable *Malice* againſt GOD and the Souls of Men, and the *Peace of his Children*? And is there not *an innumerable Company of* HOLY ANGELS, a *thouſand times ten thouſand*, and *Millions* of Millions of bleſſed Creatures, who behold the *Face* of GOD above, and *ſtand* in his Preſence, and are *Thrones*, and *Dominions* and *Principalities* and *Powers* in the Heavenly Places? moſt *benevolent* and *friendly* to the *Souls* of Men on Earth, and *Fellow-Servants* Worſhippers and *Brethren* with all that are *ſanctified* in the Church of CHRIST? and they are all by *Office* as well as Inclination *Miniſtring Spirits*, *ſent forth to miniſter unto the Heirs of Salvation.* Hebr. i. 14. --- Let us conſider THESE in their *Miniſtration* under CHRIST the REDEEMER, and the HOLY GHOST the SANCTIFIER; and what an *Over-ballance* are they, for the *Conſolation* and Security of the poor *tempted* Members of the Church on Earth! as it is *written*, for our *Learning* and Support, Pſalm. ciii. ult. *Bleſs the* LORD *ye his* ANGELS *that excel in Strength, that do his Commandments, hearkning to the Voice of his Word! bleſs the* LORD, *all ye his* HOSTS, *ye Miniſters of his that do his Pleaſure! Bleſs the* LORD *O our Souls!*

Is it not written of theſe holy, happy, *potent Spirits* in the *Heavenly* Places, that they are *the Angels of* CHRIST's *little Ones* here below, and *do always behold the Face of their* FATHER *in Heaven*? And that *he gives them Charge concerning* 'em, to *keep 'em* in all their Way, to *hold 'em up in their Arms!* And that there is *Joy in the Preſence* of theſe *Holy Ones* above, over every *one Sinner that repenteth*!*

Theſe bleſſed *Angels* are ever *oppoſing* and even *fighting* againſt the *Devil* and his Angels; inſomuch that we read of the *War in Heaven by Michael and his Angels*

* Pſal. xci. 11. Matth. xviii. 10. Luke xv. 7, 10.

againſt

againſt the *Dragon, the Old Serpent, the Devil and Satan; the Accuſer of the Brethren,* Rev. xii. 7, 10. It is the ſame *Arch-Angel* that St. *Jude* tells us *contended with the Devil about the Body of Moſes,* and probably preſided at his *Burial!* the ſame *Prince* among the *Angels of Light,* whom *Daniel* ſaw *ſtanding up* for the *afflicted Church* before the coming of CHRIST in the Fleſh, and *holding with* its perſecuted Members. *Dan.* xii. 1. Be it the LORD CHRIST himſelf, or ſome *Cœleſtial Principality* commiſſion'd by HIM, the *Succour of his Elect* is the *ſame* thro' Life and Death; and it may be ſaid to the moſt *timorous* and frighted of them, as *Eliſha* to his terrified *Servant,* awaking early in the Morning and ſeeing the *Aſſyrian Hoſt* incompaſſing the Hill on which the *Seer* dwelt; "*fear not, for they that be with us are more* than all theſe *Enemies*; more in Number and more for Strength! "*and the* LORD *open'd the young Man's Eyes, and behold the Mountain was full of Horſes and Chariots of Fire round about Eliſha*: i. e. he ſaw an *Army* of bright and *flaming Angels* guarding *the Man of GOD*; and leading away *blindfold* the *Aſſyrian* Hoſt at the Will and *Prayer* of the meek and humble *Prophet*: a ſtrange and pleaſing *Spectacle to Heaven and Iſrael.* 2 Kings vi. 15, 16.

This is indeed the very *State* of the *Caſe,* as it is laid before us in our *Bible,* from the Beginning to the End of it; that thro' *Patience* and Comfort of the *Scripture* the leaſt and weakeſt *Believer* may have *Hope*; and attain *Quietneſs and Aſſurance for ever.*

The Time would *fail* me to mention the *recorded Miniſtrations* of the *Angels* of GOD to *Abraham* and *Jacob* and even to *Hagar* and *Iſhmael*; to *Elias* and *Daniel* and the Worthies in *Babylon*; to *Peter* in the *Priſon,* to *Paul* in the *Storm*; to *Cornelius* in the *Cloſet* or Family, and to *John in Patmos, for the Teſtimony of* JESUS.

The ſame have been the *Succours by Angels* to the *Church* in general, from the Slaughter of the *firſt-born in Egypt,* and the giving *the Law on Sinai*; unto *David's* taking the Kingdom and *marching* againſt the *Philiſtines,* upon the *Signal* given him of an *inviſible Hoſt* going be-

fore him over the *Mulberry Trees*; and unto the Day of *Joſhua the High-Prieſt*, when the *Captive Church* had juſt emerged out of the *Den and Fires of Babylon*: *Satan* then oppos'd virulently his *bitter Accuſations* againſt *Him* and his People, to fruſtrate their Prayers and *Interceſſions*; but the LORD Himſelf *anſwer'd* for 'em: HE that had taken upon *Himſelf* their *Sins*, to bear them away: Zech. iii. 2, 4, 7. "*The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan! even the LORD that hath choſen Jeruſalem rebuke thee! Is not this a Brand pluckt out of the Fire? And he ſpake to thoſe that ſtood before Him*; the holy *Angels his Attendants*; who in this *Viſion* (ſays the judicious Mr. *Clark*) repreſented the *Miniſters* of CHRIST, as his *ordinary Inſtruments* in this Work; *ſaying*, "*Take away his filthy Garments from him!*---- And to *Him* he ſaid, "*I have cauſed thy Iniquity to paſs from thee, and I will clothe thee with Change of Raiment*: And then the *Angel of the* LORD *proteſted unto Joſhua*, (as the preſent *Repreſentative* of his humble mourning and *accuſed Ones*) ſaying, *If thou wilt walk in my Ways and keep my Charge, I will give thee Places among theſe* (my Angels) *that are ſtanding by*; i. e. in the *Heavenly Manſions* among 'em for evermore! altho' now *thou and thy Fellows are Men wonder'd at*! For *behold I will bring forth my Servant the* BRANCH, thine and their ſtrong and mighty REDEEMER.

And having thus nam'd HIM, the glorious SON OF MAN whom the LORD has made *ſtrong for Himſelf*, and in WHOM only we have *Righteouſneſs and Strength*, in Whom *the Seed of Iſrael are juſtified and do glory*; let me finiſh the preſent *Argument* by obſerving, what all the *tempted Members of* CHRIST ſhould lay up in their Hearts;----how the *Angels of GOD* miniſter'd with unknown *Adoration* and Delight to the MAN CHRIST JESUS, in the Days of his *Humiliation*, *Temptations*, *Miniſtry*, *Sufferings* and *Dying* for us; from before his *Conception* and *Birth* unto his *Burial* and *Reſurrection* from the Dead! He was *ſeen of Angels*, worſhip'd and miniſter'd to by 'em while *lying in the Manger*; "*The Multitude of the Heavenly Hoſt gave Glory to GOD in the Higheſt*,

from

from their *Goodwill to Men*, congratulating us on the *Goodwill of GOD* to us in a SAVIOUR's Birth; and they directed the *Shepherds* to the Place where the *Babe* lay: In like Manner they attended and *guarded* Him through his *Infancy*, alſo in the *Wilderneſs* of Temptation, in the *Garden* of his *Agony*, at his mock *Trial* and on his *Croſs*: *They* never *deſerted* him through all theſe *tragic Scenes*, while his *Diſciples forſook him and fled*; and while *the Dogs compaſs'd him and the Aſſembly of the wicked incloſed him*: No, He told his *Guard* and *Crucifiers* that at his Word the *Legions of Angels* ſtood ready then to have deliver'd him.

They attended his holy *Body* to its Grave, and there guarded it to the Morning of the *third Day*, when they *roll'd away the Stone* from the Mouth of the *Sepulchre*; and then comforted the *holy Women* in their *Tears and Fears*; "*We know that you ſeek* JESUS *that was crucified! Come ſee the Place where the* LORD *lay*; and *go quickly and tell* overwhelmed *Peter* and the *Diſciples*.

And now, O humble Believer in JESUS, the moſt *ſinful* and the moſt *timorous*, wilt thou not *encourage* thy ſelf from the Readineſs of the *Holy Angels* to ſuccour and *help* thee in thy Times of *Need*! You muſt *ſee them* alſo, ever *near thee*, by the Commandment of thy SAVIOUR! They *love thee* for his Sake, and in a Meaſure as they ever loved *Him*; and as the *Members of his Body, of his Fleſh and of his Bones*; *filling up what is behind of the Sufferings of* CHRIST *in your Fleſh*, Col. i. 24.

Yet muſt you *beware of truſting in the Aids of Angels*, any more than you would in any *Arm of Fleſh!* Nor may you *pray to 'em*, or give 'em *Worſhip*, as the bleſſed *Apoſtle* himſelf was ready to do when they *had brought* him ſo many *Revelations* and *Comforts* from *GOD!* "*See thou do it not* (ſaid the *Angel*) for I am thy *Fellow*-Creature and *Servant*, and a Worſhipper of JESUS!---Never the leſs *receive 'em as the Angels of GOD*, as *Abraham* and *Jacob* did; "*This is GOD's Hoſt!* and on the *Ladder from Heaven to Earth* ſee 'em *deſcending* to, and *aſcending* from the *Sons of Men!*---- Come into a *holy Fel-*

lowſhip and Communion with them, by FAITH in CHRIST, and by the *Life of* JESUS *manifeſted in thy mortal Fleſh.* 2 Cor. iv. 8, 11. Let 'em only ſee CHRIST and his Grace in thee and they will *cleave* to thee in Love, and never *leave* thee to the Will of *Satan*, thy and *their* Enemy.--- You muſt make the LORD *your Refuge*, even the MOST HIGH *your Habitation* ; and then the *Promiſe* is, Pſalm xci. 11. *He ſhall give his* ANGELS *Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways* ; *and they ſhall bear thee up in their Hands, leſt thou daſh thy Foot againſt a Stone* : *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion and the Adder*, &c.

But ſtill *beware* of the *Serpent*,---for he *quoted this very Text* to the SON OF GOD himſelf, when he mov'd him to *caſt himſelf down from the Pinnacle of the Temple.* Watch and *pray* that ye enter not into *Temptation*, and then be *ſtrong* in the LORD and in the *Power of his Might.* When thou paſſeſt through the *Waters* they ſhall not *overflow* thee ; and when thou walkeſt thro' the *Fires* thou ſhalt not be *burnt.* In all your Acts of *Worſhip*, ſecret and publick, *ſee the LORD ſitting upon his Throne*, high and lifted up, and *his Train filling* the Cœleſtial *Temple !* before Him ſtand the *Seraphims with cover'd Faces*, and you may hear 'em *cry* to one another ; "*Holy, holy, holy is the* LORD OF HOSTS, *the whole Earth is full of his Glory !* Nor think your ſelf then *undone* although *a Man of unclean Lips*, and dwelling among *a People* of unclean Lips ! but confide in the *LORD of Angels* that he will cauſe his *Seraphims to fly down* at thy contrite Prayer (as he ſent *Gabriel* to *Daniel* while he was making his *Supplication*) " *to touch thy Lips and take away thy Sin.* Iſai. vi. 7. Then you may beat a *Defiance* to all the *Powers of Hell* and ſay, Rom. viii. 35-----39. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the Love of* CHRIST ? *Shall Tribulation or Diſtreſs, Perſecution, Famine, Nakedneſs* or *Sword* ? No, *I am perſwaded that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the Love of GOD which is in* CHRIST JESUS *our LORD.*

4. If

4. If *ſome* of GOD's Children are annoy'd with moſt grievous and abhor'd *Injections* from the *Evil One*; then how *thankful* to GOD ſhould *others* be, who are *free from ſuch Annoyances* are mercifully *prevented* and graciouſly *preſerved* in Peace and a right Mind.

It is of the great Mercy and Power of GOD, that *no more* of us ſuffer, as *ſome* have done from the *fiery Darts of Satan*. If GOD did not *reſtrain* and chain him up; if he did not ſet a *Hedge* of Defence about us, as he did about *Job*; of which his Enemy *complain'd*; if GOD ſhould give him the *Permiſſion* which he *eagerly* ſeeks and catches at; how *miſerable* would he ſoon make our Life? how would the *Wolf worry* every Sheep of CHRIST's Fold? not a Moment's *Eaſe* would he give us; into what *Dejections* and Deſpondencies would he ſcare us? and into what pale and meagre *Spectres of Melancholly* would he change us! What *Viſions of Hell* would he begin within us, and multiply upon us!---But the merciful GOD *ſuffers not* the Devil to have his Will and *Luſt* upon us; and hence is the Peace, *Tranquility* and Comfort which his *Saints* enjoy; all their *Quiet and Serenity* is the Gift of GOD; and *when He giveth Quietneſs who can make Trouble?*

It is a ſpecial *Precept* of Religion, Col. iii. 15. *Let the Peace of GOD rule in your Hearts, unto which ye are called in one Body, and be ye thankful.* And it is a ſpecial *Benediction*, Phil. iv. 7. *The Peace which paſſeth all Underſtanding keep your Hearts and Minds thro'* JESUS CHRIST. And a ſpecial gracious *Promiſe* it is, ℣. 9. *The GOD of Peace ſhall be with you: The GOD of Peace ſhall bruiſe Satan under your Feet.* Rom. xvi. 20.

When we ſee *others* in racking *Pains*, it ſhould raiſe our Souls in *Thankſgivings* to GOD for the Comforts of *Eaſe*. When we ſee others drooping and ſinking under *Melancholly* and Sorrow of Heart, our more eaſy, *bright* and cheerful Minds ſhould be lift up in *Praiſe* to GOD: It is the Way to fix and increaſe a ſanctified *Joy* in us. But a Soul *reſtored* from the *Pains* of Melancholly, more eſpecially after it has ſuffer'd the permitted *Terrors of GOD*

GOD, from the *Temptations of Satan,* will beſt know how to *prize* the Mercy of a *quiet* Mind, and riſe in thankful *Praiſes* for it. ---- How ſweet think you was it to the poor *Demoniac,* that had been ſo long *raving* and raging, *tearing* himſelf and roaring among the *Tombs*; when the *evil Spirit* was caſt out, and he was *ſitting at* JESUS *Feet clothed and in a right Mind?* Luke viii. 35. Pleaſant it was to *others* to ſee him there and thus, who had been ſo lately *driven and torn by the Legion;* but how much *more* pleaſant was it to the *Man* himſelf! how did he *adore* his Deliverer, and embrace his ſacred *Feet*? How did he bleſs himſelf in the *Change* wrought upon him! torn by *Devils* before, and now gather'd under the *healing Wings* of his SAVIOUR! --- O let us bleſs GOD for the free and quiet Uſe of our *Reaſon* and Underſtanding; and a well informed, faithful and yet peaceful *Conſcience!* Let *this be our Rejoicing* (let us ſeek it, by living ſo before GOD as to attain and preſerve it) *the Teſtimony of our Conſciences that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleſhly Wiſdom, but by the Grace of GOD, we have our Converſation in the World.*

How *dreadful* is the Story of King *Saul, when the evil Spirit from the* LORD *troubled him!* not all the *State of a King,* nor the Pleaſures of a *Court,* nor the Fidelity of ſuch Sons as *Jonathan* and *David*; not *David's Sword* nor yet his *Harp,* nor yet the *Shouts of Victory* nor *Songs of Triumph* could *charm* down nor *chaſe* away the gloomy *Fiend.* O let us fear *Sin,* and flee *Guilt,* which cauſes the *Spirit of the* LORD to depart from Men, and opens a wide Door for the *evil Spirit from the* LORD, by his Judgment and Permiſſion, to *enter* into and torment them. 1 Sam. xvi. 14. *David's* Spirit of *Devotion* is the beſt *Prevention,* and the ſureſt *Cure* of it. *Integrity and Uprightneſs* muſt *preſerve us*! that's a ſolid and deep *Foundation* to build a ſetled *Peace* on: *Simplicity* and *godly Sincerity.* The Winds may *blow,* the Clouds gather *black,* the *Rains* fall, and the *Seas* roar and beat; but a Houſe founded on this *Rock,* by Faith in CHRIST, is ſafe. --- *Conſcience* is a ſure *Friend* to the *upright,* but a terrible

Enemy

Enemy to the *vain* and falſe, the preſumptuous and the *Hypocrite*. Well might falſe and ungrateful *Saul*, falſe to his GOD and to his *People*, to his *Sons* and faithful *Servants*, have his *Conſcience* enrag'd and inflam'd againſt him. It is not to be impos'd on and *deceiv'd* by Men at their Will, nor yet to be brib'd or ſtunn'd. It will not be *adjur'd* to Quietneſs by a feigned Force of Devotion, but *exaſperated* the more; as *Saul* found it, when he would have enquir'd of the LORD again, but he anſwered him *not*. So when the Sons of *Sceva* exorcis'd the *evil Spirit* in the Name of JESUS whom *Paul* preached; the *poſſeſſed Man leapt on 'em, and prevailed againſt them, and they fled away naked and wounded*: Acts xix. 15.

We muſt ſeek Quiet and *Reſt* from GOD only, in his *own Way*; the Way of Faith, Repentance, Prayer, Praiſe, in ſecret and public; by Meditation, Self-Examination, Ejaculations, Self-Dedication and Reſignation; in the conſcientious Diſcharge of all *relative Duties*, abiding with GOD in our *Callings*, and walking with Him in our *Houſes*; and then in *his Houſe*, in all the *Ordinances* of the LORD; keeping his *Sabbaths*, chuſing the Things that *pleaſe* him, and laying hold on his *Covenant*; all which GOD has *joined*, and we muſt by no means ſeparate 'em; doing *Juſtice*, loving *Mercy*, and walking *humbly* before him; that he may give us *within his Houſe and Walls* a Place and Name among his *Sons and Daughters*, an everlaſting *Name* which ſhall not be cut off. *Iſai.* lvi. 3, --- 7.

In theſe Ways let us make Conſcience of labouring after a gracious Eaſe and *Cheerfulneſs* of Spirit, by the Will of GOD: "If He *giveth Quietneſs* who can make "Trouble? And if he *hideth his Face* who then can "behold him? My Soul *wait thou only* on the LORD "for all my Expectation is from him! Pſal. cxxx. "Out of the *Depths* have I *cried* unto thee O LORD! "hear my Voice, let thine *Ear be attentive* to my Sup- "plications! I *wait* for the LORD, my *Soul* doth wait, "and in his *Word* do I hope. ---- It is promiſed, Iſai. "xxxii. 17. *The Work of Righteouſneſs ſhall be Peace,*

Quietneſs

" *Quietneſs and Aſſurance for ever.* GOD *meets* him that is *rejoicing* in working *Righteouſneſs*, thoſe that *remember him in his Ways.* ---- But to return from this ſmall Digreſſion,

5. If ſome of the Children of GOD are here often annoy'd with foul *Injections* from Hell, how ſhould it *excite* and raiſe in 'em all the *more earneſt Deſires after Heaven*; the Place and State of everlaſting *Reſt* from Sin and Sorrow, and of the *Perfection of Holineſs* and *Fulneſs of Joys* for ever.

When *Job*, after too long a *Silence*, *open'd his Mouth*, it was to *curſe the Day of his Birth*, and wiſh himſelf in *his Grave*; becauſe " there the *Wicked ceaſe from troubling*, and there the *weary are at Reſt*, they hear not the *Voice of the Oppreſſor*.----O he ſhould have *refreſhed* himſelf rather with his *Hopes* of being in a very ſhort time *in Heaven*, the REST which remaineth to the People of GOD for ever! where are *Pleaſures for evermore.* And this was his *Hope* and *Joy* and *Crown* of Rejoicing, as he tells us, Chap. xix. 25. " For I know that my *Redeemer liveth*, and though after my Skin *Worms* deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh I ſhall *ſee GOD*; whom I ſhall *ſee* for my Self and *mine Eyes ſhall behold*, and not another, though my *Reins be conſumed* within me.

The diſtant Point from *Hell* is HEAVEN; and ſo the *Hallelujahs* of One from the *Blaſphemies* of the other. *Satan* who *left* the peaceful Realms of Light, can *return* thither no more: he *liſts not* to come near that *Holy of Holies* again, nor *could* he find Entrance: Or if when the *Sons of GOD* here below preſent themſelves before Him, the *Devil* come among them, it is to *diſturb* their Devotion, and to ſeek ſome *Permiſſion* within the Compaſs of *his own Air*, to have the *ſifting* of ſome weak and frail *Saint* here below, or the deceiving ſome *Veſſel of his own* into Deſtruction, as he *ask'd* and had leave to do *Ahab*. The *Dead in Chriſt* only are *free* and far *away* out of the Reach of his Malice; they look *down* on the *Batts of the Night* on our Surface and ſay, "*How art thou fallen, Lucifer, Son of the Morning.* The Soul in

in Heaven is *confirm'd* in Grace and *ſure* for ever, and paſt all *Fear* of Evil : *Sin* is no more, and could the *Evil One* come there he could find *nothing* to faſten a Temptation on : *He ſees it and is grieved, and gnaſhes with his Teeth, and melts away.* If he make *War* with *Michael*, he is ſure of a Defeat : *O thou Enemy, Deſtructions are come to a perpetual End.*

Now he *comes down in Wrath, great* Wrath, *for he knoweth* that *his Time* to tempt, and the *godly Man's* Time to *ſuffer* by his Temptation, *is ſhort* : The preſent *Life* is the *only* Time ; *Death* puts the Believer far *away* out of the Reach of any ſpiritual Foe ; the *Spirit of the Juſt* as ſoon as out of the *Body of Sin*, is out of the *World* of Sin alſo ; for it paſſes immediately and *triumphantly* thro' the *Powers of the Air*, under a bright and ſtrong *Guard of Angels ;* before whom the *infernal Hoſts fly* and *melt* away, as they did before the *Chariots and Horſes of Fire* that came down for *Elias ;* for the *little Ones* in the Church of CHRIST have their *Angels*, as well as *He* the *Prince* among his *Prophets*, which *behold the Face* of their FATHER in Heaven, and know *their Faces* too here below ; and are as *ready* to carry their *Souls* to the Paradiſe of GOD, as they were to *bury the Body of Moſes*. Then a *Fulneſs* of Holineſs, Glory and Joy remains to them for ever and ever ; infinite and eternal Joys are miniſtred from the *Viſion of GOD* and of the LAMB ; and from the Sight and Hearing of the *Adorations* of the *thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands* about the THRONE ; ſaying with a *loud Voice*, " Worthy is the LAMB that was *ſlain*, to receive Power, " and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour and *Glory*, and Bleſſing ! O in what *Tranſport* will every new *arriving Saint* fall down with them, and *worſhip Him that liveth for ever and ever.*

But let us only conſider the Day of *a Believer's Death* as his *Freedom for ever* from a State of *Temptation*, either from within or from without ; his *putting off the Armour of Righteouſneſs* which he wore here, and *boaſting over* an Enemy utterly *beaten* and broken, never to *rally* more

againſt him; what a welcome *bleſſed* Day muſt *this* be unto him! *O thou Enemy, Deſtructions are come to a perpetual End!* " Now is come *Salvation and Strength*, the Kingdom of our GOD and the Power of his *Might*! for *the Accuſer of the Brethren is caſt down; and they overcame him by the Blood of the* LAMB, *and by the Word of their Teſtimony; not loving their Lives unto the Death! therefore rejoice ye Heavens and all that dwell in them.* Rev. xii. 10, 11.

Thus look up to JESUS and his *crowned Saints*, poor *tempted Child of GOD* here below; and ſee the high *Reward* of *their* Patience and Conſtancy in *bearing* Temptations and *Conqueſt* over them! how bright their *Crowns*, how loud their *Songs* of Victory, and what *Palms* are in their Hands! let all animate you to *follow on* and fight and overcome, in the Strength of CHRIST, their LORD and yours! Thoſe his *Worthies* were lately weltring in *Duſt* and Sweat and Blood, as you are now! Conſider the *End* of their Faith and Patience, leſt you be *weary* and faint in your Minds. --- Let me only *read* to you the *Viſion* of theſe *Victors* above, that have *put off the Harneſs*, and *reſt from their Labours*: Revel. vii. 9, --- 17. *After this I beheld, and lo, a great Multitude, which no Man could number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues, ſtood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands; and cried with a loud Voice, ſaying, Salvation to our GOD which ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the Angels ſtood round about the Throne, and about the Elders, and the four Beaſts, and fell before the Throne on their Faces, and worſhipped GOD, ſaying, Amen: Bleſſing, and Glory, and Wiſdom, and Thankſgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might be unto our GOD for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the Elders anſwered, ſaying unto me, What are theſe which are arrayed in white Robes? and whence came they? And I ſaid unto him, Sir, thou knoweſt. And he ſaid to me, Theſe are they which came out of great Tribulation, and have waſhed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of GOD,*

GOD, and ſerve him Day and Night in his Temple: and he that ſitteth on the Throne ſhall dwell among them. They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the Sun light on them, nor any Heat. For the Lamb which is in the midſt of the Throne ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living Fountains of Waters: and GOD ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.

II. Let the *ſecond Uſe* be of *Caution* in two or three *Particulars*, wherein we may elſe do Wrong to the *Doctrine* before us and miſimprove it.

1. Let us beware of *imputing to the Devil* too much of *our own Sin and Guilt*, the corrupt Workings of our own Hearts. We have *Sin dwelling in us*, and muſt remember how we are admoniſhed by the HOLY GHOST, that *every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Luſt and enticed.* James. i. 14. The *regenerate* have the Remains and Luſting of Sin within them; and in its *Prevalence* at times the *Apoſtle* charges it on indwelling Sin; Rom. vii. 17, 20. *It is Sin which dwelleth in me.* We muſt by no means ſay, that the *Agency of the Devil* is in every *Temptation* which Men ſuffer, or *Sin* which they commit: Neither can we ſay, that his Hand *is not* in this or that Sin: He is inviſible, and our own wicked Hearts act ſo in *Conjunction* with him, that ſometimes which is moſt to blame is not to be ſaid. It is *beſt* for the *Sinner*, often to take it wholly to *himſelf*, but too *common* to hear him laying it to the *Devil*. *Satan* moved *David* to number the People, and *Satan* filled the Heart of *Ananias* and *Saphira* to lie unto the HOLY GHOST. --- Only where the *Injection is involuntary*, without and againſt a Perſon's Will; where it is *violent* unnatural, a horror and torment to a Perſon, there it may be reaſonably attributed to the *Devil*, his Malice and Force. But ordinarily it is wiſe and beſt to *charge our ſelves*, humble abaſe and loathe our ſelves before GOD. Yet it may be utterly *wrong* to accuſe, *condemn*, torment our ſelves, where we are only annoy-

ed, *aſſaulted* and tempted, without our *yeilding* to the deteſted Motion. --- In *Temptations* to Sin, that are attended with *Profit and Pleaſure* our own Hearts may in all likelyhood be the *principal*, and *Satan* only acceſſary: Or if he is *firſt* in the Motion and there be our Compliance, we are *acceſſary* in the Crime, and muſt ſmite upon our own Breaſt. Yet the *Caſe* too often is, that *profane* and *leud* People tempt the Devil to tempt them; or are ſo habituated to and ſet upon their wicked Ways, that they need no *Tempter* beſides themſelves.

2. Another *Extream* we ſhould be caution'd againſt is, of making *too light* of this Doctrine of the *Annoyances* which gracious Souls ſometimes meet with from diabolical and helliſh Suggeſtions of *Satan*. It is, I am ſenſible, a *ridiculous* kind of Suggeſtion againſt the *Devil*, in the Opinion of *many* at this Day. Many a *Free-thinker* may be ready to *ſcoff* at it as fanatical, whimſical, ſplenetic, *Enthuſiaſm* and what not. Some *virtuous* Perſons may be *too far* in ſuch a Tho't; becauſe they have never *felt* any thing of it *themſelves*, and thro' the Favour of GOD it is not the *known* Caſe of very many, and generally thoſe few by *Conſtitution* of Body ſubject to Melancholy. --- Others it may be, of the *Children* of GOD, may doubt and ſcruple much the Reality of this Truth, from the *Peace and Quiet* which thro' the Goodneſs of GOD they have always themſelves enjoyed, ſince GOD has *wro't* upon their Souls, and given 'em *Comfort* in his Ways; and they have found a holy *Fear* and Reverence of GOD increaſing with their *Pleaſure* in Religion. --- Yet I can aſſure both the *one* and the *other* (whether they profanely *ridicule*, or whether they *meekly* and tenderly *pity* our Doctrine) it is an *undoubted Fact*, what many have *felt* and others *ſeen*, and there is no *denying* againſt Senſe and Sight. It is a *real Caſe*, that many very pious Perſons are grievouſly buffeted, vexed and tormented by ſome *inviſible wicked Power*, with baſe, odious, profane, impure *Thoughts*, which their Souls abhor. --- In like manner, People may doubt or deny (if they pleaſe) whether ever there was an *Apparition* or a

Poſſeſſion,

Poſſeſſion, becauſe they themſelves were never ſo unhappy as to ſee the one or the other; or becauſe there have been *Fancies*, *Lies* and *Cheats* obtruded on the World in one Caſe or other; but to *me* however, it were the Height of *Scepticiſm* and unreaſonable doubting. --- And ſo it is to make all that has been ſaid concerning *Helliſh Annoyances* to be the Fruit of a *diſtempered Brain*, the Power of Melancholly, or Fitts of *Vapour*. --- There is a *Medium* we ſhall do well to keep, that we may not be *ſuperſtitious*; but we muſt quarrel both with *Scripture*, *Experience* and *humane Teſtimony*, if we queſtion the Reality of this *Fact*; that *good People* and of good *Underſtanding* do at times *ſuffer*, as we have been ſaying, from a cruel *Tempter* that is blaſphemous and *inviſible*.

3. A third *Caution* which I would put in is, that we *do not allow our ſelves to queſtion the Juſtice and Righteouſneſs of the Divine Permiſſion*; or to entertain *hard Tho'ts of the bleſſed* GOD on this Account. --- Alas! we are no *Judges* of what the Sovereign GOD may do or can do; or of the *Rights* and Wiſdom of his Government: We have not yet been in the *Worlds of Spirits*, to ſee their various Natures, States, Orders and Services in the *Creation of* GOD. But this we know both by *Revelation* and *Experience* that Man has *ſold* himſelf to Sin, and that he did it by the Inſtigation of the *Devil*, and what wonder than is it, that the Devil has ſo much *Acceſs* to and Influence on him; either to *gain* his Mind and Will to what is *evil*, or if that is *refuſed* then to *inſult* and terrify him.

Man gave up himſelf to the *Tempter* on his firſt Aſſault, on his plain giving the *Lye* to GOD and charging him even with an *Envy* of his Creatures Improvement in Knowledge and Happineſs; and is it any *ſtrange Puniſhment* of this his ſhameful and diſloyal *Surrender* of himſelf to the *Devil's* Will, that it ſhould be ſo much from that Day in the Power of the Tempter to vex and diſtreſs him with new Temptations, or fiery *Injections* on his reſiſting and refuſing them? or might he

he not by a juſt *Rejection* from GOD have been given over to the *Poſſeſſion of Satan*, as his *Tormentor* for ever, for his baſe Rejection of GOD, his eaſy Commandment and terrible Threatning of *Death*? --- Moreover, from Generation to Generation the *Sons* and *Daughters* of Men do in effect acknowledge, *confirm* and eſtabliſh, by their own *Act and Deed*, the Dominion and Tyranny of the *Devil* over themſelves and their Children, by their *ungodly Lives* and Converſations; abandoning themſelves and their *Offſpring* to all manner of Wickedneſs. And after all, dare they *impeach* the Goodneſs and Juſtice of GOD in *permitting* him the *Power*, which they have *themſelves given* him, of Acceſs to their *Minds* and Conſciences, either as a Tempter or a Tormentor? Is it ſtrange that the *Devil* ſhould call himſelf the *God of this World*, and ſay of the Kingdoms and Families of it, "*All this is mine!* when ſuch Multitudes are *led Captive by him at his Will* in the Places of moſt *pure Faith and Worſhip*; and *willingly deceiv'd* by him into eternal Perdition? Or is it wonderful that among the ſmall Number of thoſe that are *ſaved* from him, as to his *Rule*, ſome of them are cruelly handled and *perſecuted* by him? Can this give us any Pretence for an arraigning of the Divine *Mercy*? when as it is of the LORD's *Mercy* that the *very beſt* have not been utterly *abandon'd to themſelves*, and given up a *Prey to Satan*, as they are *ready* to acknowledge. --- How much more muſt we all own that the juſt GOD may *judicially give over* wicked and incorrigible Sinners to *their own Hearts Luſts*, and to the Power of *Satan* to *deceive and harden* them to their final Deſtruction, as he gave over *Ahab* to the *lying Spirit* and his diſmal *End!* or to *torture* them before their Time, and drive them *deſpairing* and roaring out of the World, as he did by *Judas*, *Spira* &c! And doubtleſs he may for as wiſe gracious and *holy Ends*, relating to his *own* Glory and *our* Salvation, and *Satan's Confuſion* and eternal Judgment; *try* and *explore* the Truth and Power of his *Grace* in his *Servants* and Children, by permitting the *Temptations* of the Devil, and the Efforts of his

Malice

Malice and *Spite* againſt them. Let us not *dare* therefore to have or *favour* any *hard Thoughts* of the bleſſed GOD, for his permitting the *Enemy* of our Souls and his Glory, to tempt and *diſtreſs* us when our Hearts are *moſt* and *beſt* in our *Endeavours* after a *holy Walk* before him, and *Communion* with him. In *this Frame* the *Tempter* found holy *Job*, when he ſhot the *fiery Dart* at him, "*Curſe GOD and die.*

4. The laſt *Caution* I wou'd give is this, That thoſe who have *never* ſuffer'd after *this kind* do not grow *ſecure* or *high-minded* thereon; but *fear* and *pray* that they *enter not into Temptation.* It is not becauſe you are *better* than others, that you have been *ſpared* and they grievouſly tried and *buffeted:* No, *Job* was the *firſt Saint* in his Day, and therefore the rather *ſelected* to be the *Champion*, the *David* to go out againſt *Goliah* and ſlay him. You are not *ſure* but that it may be your *Turn* to ſuffer thus, before you die. Security or *Self-Confidence* may expoſe you to the Trial and *Combat*; as *Satan* deſired to have *Peter* to *ſift* him, when he heard him *vaunt*, "*I am ready to go with Thee to Priſon and to Death.* CHRIST *pitied* him and *pray'd* for him that his *Faith* might not fail. How *well* is it for us, that we have a SAVIOUR to *fear* and care for us, when we do not *enough* fear for our ſelves.--- The *kind Rule* and *Law* to us is, the kindeſt *Admonition* and Warning imaginable to us; "*Thou ſtandeſt by Faith, be not high minded, but fear. Satan's* Advantage over *Peter* was from his Self-Aſſurance: he *foil'd* him, though he could not make his Faith to *fail.* Never therefore *preſume. Humility* is the great Security of the Grace of GOD with us, and his *Grace* is our only Preſervative. *GOD reſiſteth the proud, but giveth Grace* and *more* Grace to the *Humble.* We had need be *ſober and vigilant*, wakeful and on our Watch, becauſe *our Adverſary the Devil goeth about as a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour.* And it is with *Fear and Trembling* that we muſt be *working out our Salvation*, that ſo GOD may ſtill *work in us both to will and to do of his good Pleaſure.* Phil. ii. 13. The *Way of GOD*, his *working* on,

in

in and with us, is *agreeable to the Nature* (the Understanding and Reason, Liberty and Freedom) which he has given us; in *Concurrence* with our *own Endeavours*, and making us *diligent* and careful in them.

III. The *third Use* may be of *Conviction*, *Awakening* and *Terror* to profane BLASPHEMERS, who make a Sport of *belching* out, at their filthy Lips, those cursed and *diabolical Words*, which a *gracious* Heart trembles with *Horror* at the *Tho't* of, or to have *suggested* to him.

How many *such* are there, to be every where met with, thro' the *Christian World*, who feel *no Remorse* in *uttering* the Blasphemies against GOD which any *Devil* from *Hell* can Suggest to them! They set their *Mouth* against the Heavens, and their *Tongue* rages thro' the Earth: they make a *Mock of Sin*, misusing, abusing taking *in vain*, the holy and awful *Name of* GOD most High; in *ludicrous Oaths*, *Curses*, *Imprecations*, *atheistical* Talk, ridiculing the holy *Scriptures*, vilifying Religion! they *curse* GOD *and look up*, look about 'em and regard no Man, *damn* themselves and others in *Railery* or in *Rage*. These incarnate *Devils* turn the Earth into a *Hell* before the Time; and would *rend the Heavens* (one would think) and *tear* the Name and Royalties of GOD in Pieces. In execrable *Speech* they daily *reproach* the Name of their MAKER, his Worship and his Laws, his Threatnings and his Curse; the *Blood* of their SAVIOUR and all his offer'd Grace. Surely these are willing to be tho't the *Sons of Hell* and the Children of *Belial*, and whose else can they be! *they declare their Sin as Sodom and glory in their Shame!* they are plainly *possess'd* and acted by the *Devil*, *and his Lusts they do!* they aloud proclaim themselves his *Vassals*, and the *Enemies* of their GOD, and of all that are *good and holy!* they neither *fear* his great and glorious *Name*, nor *tremble at his Word* and Curse; but despise his *Being*, laugh at his *Wrath*, sport at his *Lightning* and Thunder, and mock at *Damnation!* --- They *wait* not for *Satan's* Motion, but would *raise* him by impious Adjurations, and bring him *up* from below! they *open wide* both Heart and Mouth

for

for him to *enter*; and provoke GOD to *depart* from them wholly; ſaying to Him, "*We deſire not the Knowledge of thy Ways!* they belch out the *Flames* of Hell, and *ſear* themſelves as with a *glowing Iron* from it.

O what a Mark of *Reprobation* do ſuch Men wear, what a *Brand* of Perdition on their Cheek and Lips! their *Mouth is full of Curſing*, their *Ways always grievous*, and the *Judgments* of GOD are *far away* out of their Sight! What *Fellowſhip* have they with *Devils* already, and how *meet* are they to go to 'em, how *ripe* for Damnation! nor would they find it any *Hell* to be with *Devils*, might they be *kindly* receiv'd by 'em in the *Pit below*, or would GOD the *Judge* ſtill ſeem to *diſregard* 'em as they think he does now; or *Conſcience* would not *awake* there to trouble 'em, and be a *never-dying*, ever-gnawing *Worm* within 'em. Surely theſe *flagrant* Sinners would *chuſe* the Company of *Devils*, if the *Fire* of Hell could be *quench'd*.

But how contrary to this is the *Spot of GOD's Children*, the *ſhining Star* worn on their Breaſt; to ſhow 'em to be among the *Nobles* of the *Court* of HEAVEN! the ſame *deviliſh Tho'ts* which are a *Pleaſure* to the wicked, *terrify* and torment the godly! the one *trembles* at that which is the other's *Sport!* It is a Sport to a *Fool* to do Miſchief; he throws about *Fire-brands*, *Arrows and Death*, and ſays----"*Am I not in jeſt?*----Let it comfort the *One* that GOD has ſaid, "*To this Man will I look that is poor and contrite, trembling at my Word!* And let it terrify the *others* to read the *Vengeance* written, "*Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the LORD thy GOD in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltleſs.* Everlaſting *Blaſphemy* ſhall be the eternal *Puniſhment* of Blaſphemers! *They* and *Devils* together ſhall *gnaw their Tongues for Pain, and blaſpheme the GOD of Heaven, and never repent to give him Glory*, Rev. xvi. 11.

If any who have us'd themſelves to profane *Swearing*, *Curſing* and execrable Speech, or who curſe *inwardly* though they dare not ſpeak out, caſt their Eyes upon *theſe Lines*; let me call upon them in the Name and

Fear of the HIGH AND LOFTY ONE *that inhabiteth Eternity*, to *repent* inſtantly of this their Wickedneſs, and fall on their *Knees* and pray that the *Thoughts* of their Hearts, and *Words* of their Mouth, may be *forgiven.*---O *why* ſhould any *dare* to *uſe* themſelves to that *Profaneſs*, which a gracious Heart ſees ſo much *Impurity* in, and feels ſo much *Horror* at !

IV. The fourth *Uſe* is of *Comfort* to *Melancholly* and *diſtreſſed Perſons* under this Oppreſſion of *Satan*, which we have been ſpeaking of.----Notwithſtanding all the *Fear and Grief* hereby occaſion'd to you, you ſee that there has *no Temptation befallen you* but what is *common* to the dear *Children* of GOD ; and that GOD will not *reckon* to you for *Sin* theſe helliſh *Injections* which have *annoy'd* and diſquieted you. They do not *pollute* your Souls, becauſe you *abhor* 'em ; they are not *yours* for you do not *like* 'em, do not *conſent* to or comply with 'em ; they have been (I hope) a *Proof* and *Diſplay* of GOD's *Grace* in you, and a *Means* of the *Increaſe* thereof to you ; nay *you are ſtrong*, I truſt, *and the Word of GOD abideth in you, and you have overcome the wicked One! becauſe greater is He that is in you than he that is in the World.* 1 John ii. 13, 14. iv. 4. Yea *bleſſed* is the Man that *endureth Temptation*, for when he is *tried* he ſhall receive the *Crown of Life* ; which the LORD, the *righteous Judge* ſhall give him !----*Bleſſed* is the Man to whom the LORD *imputeth not Iniquity*, and in whoſe Spirit there is *no Guile.*

Let ſuch *troubled Souls* conſider, that theſe *Annoyances* from the *Enemy* and the *Avenger* are much rather a hopeful *Symptom of Grace ruling* in them, than of a *graceleſs State* or the Rule of *Sin :* that they are no Argument of *weak* Grace, but rather of its *Growth* and Strength : Nor is it any Token that your Soul is *out of Frame*, and that the Exerciſe of Grace is *ſuſpended*, that it is *not lively* and vigorous ; for was not JESUS led up by the SPIRIT into the *Wilderneſs* of Temptation, immediately after his *Baptiſm*? and was not *Job* aſſaulted while

he was *fearing for his Children*, and offering *Sacrifices* according to the *Number of them all* ? --- Therefore neither are theſe diabolical *Aſſaults* any Argument of a ſad *Defect* or Decay of your *Love* to GOD, or Change of *his* toward you ! and much leſs of his *ſhutting out your Prayer* and Cry to him ; as the *Pſalmiſt* once ſuddenly apprehended when he *ſhouted* by Reaſon of Affliction and *ſpiritual Diſtreſs* : Alas ! for his *Weakneſs* ! he was never more *heard* and regarded by GOD than he was then ; even as CHRIST was never more heard, nor ever more acted ſtrong *Faith* in his FATHER's Love, than when he pray'd in the *Garden* and on the *Croſs* ; " *Father, if it be poſſible, let the Cup paſs* ? And *my GOD, my GOD, why haſt thou forſaken me* ?---- Never forget therefore ---- that preſently after the HOLY GHOST deſcended as a *Dove* upon our SAVIOUR, and the *Voice from Heaven* had ſaid of Him, " *This is my beloved SON* in whom *I am well pleaſed* ; then alſo was the *Time of Love* to Him, even his *forty-days Temptation*, and the repeated *Inſults of Hell* upon him : and it was to prove Him to be that SON of GOD which he had been *declar'd* from Heaven.

Again let it be your Comfort, *O Child of GOD*, under all your Annoyances from *Hell*, which you reſiſt and *deteſt*, that they are only a *Sign* that Satan *hates you*, and it may be *fears* you ; and that *you hate him* and ſhall never be *his*. It will comfort you to think that you are hated *by him*, as *Job* was ; he *loves his own*, and we know that he *hated* CHRIST *firſt*, and hates the holy ever bleſſed GOD implacably, for evermore.

I add, that it may be a Sign that *Satan fears thee*, and therefore *furiouſly attacks* thee : he fears (I hope) that he ſhall *loſe* thee, and ſees thee at leaſt beginning to *fear GOD*, and in his Fear *turning* earneſtly from Sin, *caring* for thy Soul, and ſeeking after an Intereſt in CHRIST, and the Mercies of GOD thro' Him : this will *inrage* him to be ſure, and if GOD permit him he will doubtleſs come down in *great Wrath*, as knowing that his Time is *ſhort* if thou art turning to GOD : As the

Lion roars firſt after his *Prey*, but more yet if he ſees it eſcaping from him.

I ſay again, to *conflict with Satan* is the *Property* of true *Grace*, and it is the Property of the *Devil* to conflict with *that*: who but the *Saints of the* MOST HIGH have ever been the *Objects of his Spite*, the Subjects of his *Perſecution*! but *fear none of theſe things which thou ſhalt ſuffer! behold, the Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into Priſon, that ye may be tried, and you ſhall have Tribulation ten Days! be thou faithful unto Death and I will give thee the Crown of Life.* Rev. ii. 10.

Yea, though thou be *foil'd by Satan* in ſome Encounters, as *Peter* was once and twice, yet you may "*riſe* again by *Repentance*, and obtain *Eſtabliſhment* in Grace by your *Fall*, as he did. And remember, "that GOD *trains up* thoſe whom he *loves* and is preparing for *Glory* by Exerciſes of *Trial*, Temptation and Suffering. So *Joſeph* and *David* were educated long in the *School* of Affliction, and fitted for their *Princely* State and Glories. ---- And the *greater* the *Fight of Affliction* be, the greater is the *Victory*, and the greater the *Triumph*.

But you will *ſay* after all, "I *queſtion* whether I do indeed *reſiſt*, *reject*, *abhor* and *ſpue out* thoſe Evil *Thoughts* as I ought to do, and as a *Child of GOD* certainly *ought* and will do! I often *fear*, and apprehend I have *ſad Cauſe* to fear, that I give 'em *Admiſſion* and make 'em my *own*." ---- But I *anſwer* again, "If you *fear*, *hate*, *pray* againſt 'em; if they afflict, *grieve*, burthen and *diſtreſs* you; *you do abhor 'em*; you do *reject* 'em. "It is "*Conqueſt* enough (ſays Mr. *Capel* in his Treatiſe on "*Temptations*) that thoſe evil Thoughts are *born as your* "*Burthen*, too *heavy* for you to bear; though the Soul "can't get *rid* of 'em, yet it reſiſts and overcomes 'em: "The beaten Enemy *rallies* and is beaten again. ----- "The *Servants* of GOD (ſays he) are "*more afraid* "*than hurt*; they are rather *Bug-bears* than any real "Hurt or Miſchief to them: The Horror of 'em keeps "from the *Sin* it ſelf; terrifies from it.

V. I come now to the *fifth* and *laſt Uſe*, which is of *Counſel and Direction*; what *Rules* to give for *Support* againſt, and for *Deliverance* from ſuch curſed and deviliſh *Suggeſtions* and Annoyances, as we have been treating of.

Now the repeated *Rule* to us is in general *this*, *Jam.* iv. 7. *Reſiſt the Devil and he ſhall flee from you*: 1 Pet. v. 9. *Whom reſiſt, ſtedfaſt in the Faith.* We muſt refuſe, deny, oppoſe, repulſe, reſolutely and ſtedfaſtly: And to help us in doing ſo,

1. Let us *get* and ever *preſerve* right *Conceptions* of the DIVINE BEING; even thoſe *vaſt* and *awful* and glorious ones which the *Word* and *Works* of GOD ſupply us with. Theſe let us be *frequently* calling to Mind, ſo as to *fix* them in our Minds, with great Solemnity. Let us uſe our ſelves to *think* often of GOD, and ever *ſpeak* of Him with great Serioufneſs and Reverence; never *lightly* or vainly. ---- I do not ſay that the *Habit* of this *will keep us* from the Temptations of *Satan*, nor make 'em *leſs tormenting* to us; no, the *Torture* of it is from the *greater Reverence* we have of GOD; but it will *arm and fortify* us againſt the Temptations, and *ſtrengthen* us to reſiſt them.

For how can I be won't to think of GOD aright, according to his Excellent MAJESTY, Holineſs, Goodneſs, Wiſdom; his Eternity, Immenſity, Sovereign Dominion and Power; his Truth Grace and Mercy; my Creator, Preſerver, Saviour, Sanctifier and heavenly Father; and yet *bear* to have any Thing mean, baſe, vile ſuggeſted to me of Him; or that any ſuch Thought ſhould riſe within me againſt him! No, the better we know what GOD is, the *more* ſhall we eſteem, admire, venerate, love and joy in Him, and the *leſs* ſhall we endure an *unworthy* Thought of Him; but our *Faith* will turn it into an *Occaſion* of a more expreſs and raiſed *Adoration.*

2. That we may *defend* our ſelves from, or *overcome* ſuch Aſſaults of the *Evil One*, let us diligently *ſtudy the Holy Scriptures, meditate* much in GOD's Law, attentively *read*

read his Word daily, and attend on the *preaching* of it with Reverence, Meekneſs and Love. This is the *Shield of Faith*, whereby to *quench all the fiery Darts of the wicked One.* Eph. vi. 16. This is the *Helmet of Salvation* and the *Sword of the Spirit.* By this we muſt *defend* our ſelves, and *put by* the dangerous *Paſſes*, the deadly Thruſts of the Enemy; and by this we are to *offend* and *pierce the Tempter*, whom we muſt *wound* and ſtab and torture by oppoſing the *written Word* to his curſed Motions. "*It is written*, ſaid our *Holy* SAVIOUR, and ſo he has taught us to *ſhame and put to Flight the Armies of the Aliens.* The *Devil* can't have the *Face* to ſay to us, as he did to *Eve*, "*Yea, has GOD ſaid?* when we open our *Bible* to him, and ſhew him the written *Text*; written by the *Finger* of GOD himſelf, concerning *Himſelf.* At *other* Debate or Argument he may be too *hard* for us, but keep to *this* and there can be no *Reply* or Evaſion. Tell the *Tempter* you fear and ſtand in Awe of the *holy Word*, and by that alſo *he* ſhall be judged! tell him that *he* alſo knows it to be true *and trembles! Parly not* with him, if he ſay again, "*Yea, has GOD ſaid?* But *inſiſt* upon it, "*Yes has GOD ſaid*, and thou knoweſt it. Let us *keep to the Word*, and GOD will keep us from or in the Hour of Temptation. Rev. iii. 10. *Eve* loſt her *ſelf* and us, by not abiding by what ſhe *knew* GOD had ſpoken. Inſtead of inſiſting on GOD's Authority and Veracity, ſhe went to *reaſoning* with the *Serpent*: She ſhould have kept to the *Commandment*, the *Promiſe* and the *Threatning*; kept the *Terrors* and the *Rewards* of GOD in her Eye;" do this and *live*, but in the Day thou *eateſt*, thou ſhalt *ſurely die.* Will the *Tempter* ſhow us the *Kingdoms* of this World and all the Glories of 'em; let us ſhow him the Glories of *Heaven*, and the Flames of *Hell*; and where is the *Power* of his Temptation? ---- The *End* of the written and preached *Word* is to inſtruct direct and warn us, that we *be not ignorant of his Devices*, and that we be *arm'd againſt the Wiles of the Devil.* "I went into the *Sanctuary* (ſaid the tempted and dejected *Pſalmiſt*)

miſt) and there *underſtood I the End* of the Wicked, in whoſe flouriſhing I was grieved. The *Word* brought him *Light* and Comfort, and ſcatter'd all his *Clouds*. It is *mighty through GOD to the pulling down Imaginations, and every high Thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of GOD, revenging* every Attempt againſt it, *and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of* CHRIST. 2 Cor. x. 5. It is the Means appointed for our *Deliverance from the Power of Darkneſs*, and of our *Tranſlation into the Kingdom of GOD's dear* SON : The Means of recovering Souls out of the *Snare of the Devil*, when they are in moſt Danger of being *taken Captive* by him. 2 Tim. ii. 26.

§. PRAYER, ſincere, and fervent and continued *Prayer*, is a moſt neceſſary, ſpecial, excellent and *effectual Means of quenching Satan's fiery Temptations*, and to fix the Soul in a ſtedfaſt raiſed *Reverence of GOD*, and *Truſt* in Him. It is a *grand Article* and Part of Prayer, as our LORD has taught us in his moſt excellent *Form* and *Directory*, the LORD's *Prayer*, " *lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil ;* the Evil *one Satan*, the evil *thing Sin.*

In the *Poſſeſſions* of old, we read that the *worſt kind* of unclean and malicious *Spirits* went out by *Prayer and Faſting*. To be ſure then let us not *neglect* this powerful Means, which is always *preſent* with us; for we are bid to *draw nigh always* with true Hearts, and in the *full Aſſurance of Faith*; praying always with *all Prayer* (vocal or ejaculatory as Occaſion offers; ---- and *when* does it not offer ?)

This *Direction* is not only a matter of *Counſel* to us, but of *Commandment* alſo, and ſpecial *Preſcription* : for when the *Apoſtle* in the Name of CHRIST had been numbring to the *Epheſians*, all the *Parts of the Chriſtian Armour*, whereby they muſt *ſtand in the evil Day*, he adds upon and unto all THIS ; " *praying always* with *all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perſeverance.* This is both the Saints *Strong Hold*, for Refuge and Retreat from the *Enemy*; " *I flee unto Thee* " *to hide me;* " *Thou art my Hiding Place, and ſhalt compaſs*

paſs me about with Songs of Deliverance: And it is alſo his *Tower of Salvation*, from whence he *diſcharges* on the Enemy, and ſometimes can *defie* him and *triumph* over him. When the *Thorn* pierced moſt, and *Satan buffetted* the holy *Apoſtle*, he *beſought the Lord thrice*; and received the bleſſed *Anſwer*, "*My Grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee.* He had learned this of our LORD JESUS in the *Garden of Temptations*, that *Hour of the Power of Darkneſs*, when he went away the *third time*, with increaſing *Fervency*, Importunity and Submiſſion; *O my Father, if this Cup may not paſs away.* So he encounter'd and vanquiſh'd the *Powers of Darkneſs*, and *ſanctified* to the Church for ever the Way of *Prayer* for *Victory* over them, and *Deliverance* from them.---When *Peter* alſo was to be tempted, CHRIST *prayed for him*, and told him that he had done ſo, that he might *pray for himſelf.* It ever was and will be the Way of GOD's People. When *Rabſhakah blaſphem'd*, rav'd and threatned, *Hezekiah lift up his Prayer*, and GOD anſwer'd, Let the *Daughter of Sion deſpiſe* him! *whom has he reproached!*---and when *Haman had deviſed* againſt the Church, *Eſther and Mordecai* ſought the LORD by *Faſting and Prayer*, and then ſhe *fell down in Tears* alſo before the King.--- Do we *feel* or *fear* the Annoyances of the *evil Spirit*, let us *go* in our *Tears* with *Faith* to the *good* SPIRIT *of* GOD, for his *Aids*, Succours, Influences, to prevent and keep us; and tho' the *Tempter* ſhould follow you to your *Knees* and even dare to ſuggeſt *Blaſphemy* to you there; yet let him not *deter* or drive you from *Praying*, but double your *Adorations* of GOD, and ſay "*At what time I am afraid I will truſt in Thee; in GOD will I praiſe his Word, in the* LORD, *I have put my Truſt; I will not fear* what Men or Devils can do unto me.

4. Pray for *heavenly Prudence*, and the *Wiſdom* that comes from *above*, for *the Government of your Thoughts*, that *Satan* may not find *Advantages* againſt you thro' your *not keeping your Heart with all Diligence.* We muſt be *Workers together with GOD*, and *Heart-work* is *hard* Work. If the LORD be thy *Keeper*, he will help thee to *keep thy ſelf*, and to guard the Thoughts of thy Heart,

Heart, " *Examine me, O LORD, and prove me ; try my* " *Reins and my Heart ; for thy Loving Kindneſs is be-* " *fore my Eyes, and I have walked in thy Truth :* " *Search me O GOD and know my Heart, try me and know* " *my Tho'ts and ſee if there be any wicked Way in me, and* " *lead me in the Way everlaſting.* The *Habit* of *vain*, trifling, light, worldly, ſenſual *Thoughts*, gives *Place* and *Power* to the *Devil*; and *opens* the Heart wide to him to take *Poſſeſſion*, and his *Goods will be in Peace*, for he deſires no more, nor any *faſter* hold ; he gives therefore the careleſs, *tho'tleſs* Heart no Trouble : On the contrary, if a Perſon begins to *take Tho't* about the State of his Soul, the *Enemy* of all Righteouſneſs will preſently oppoſe and raiſe a *War*, in that Soul ; which on the *Soul's Part* muſt be *carried on* by guarding and governing the Imaginations, Inclinations, Deſires and Reſolutions of the Mind and Will ; that *vain Tho'ts may not lodge within us*, but be kept out or turn'd out : ---- But the Government of the *Tho't* is too large and wide a *Field of Argument* to be here enter'd on ; and what the *Argument* I am upon ſuppoſes the *Perſon* at *preſent* to be much *diſabled* for ; and therefore *Divines* do in this *Caſe* rather *adviſe* him *not to be too intent upon and ſollicitous about* ; but rather only to *neglect*, *ſlight*, turn *away* from, and *diſdain* the *foul Injection*, whatever it be ; which may be the moſt proper and *effectual Rule and Power* the Soul can have, or expreſs *over it ſelf* in ſuch a Caſe.

5 *Keep not the Devil's Counſel, and give not way to Melancholly, Diſcontent and Dejection*, but beware of *Solitude and Idleneſs*, and *reveal your Trouble to* your *Miniſter*, *Parent* or ſome gracious *Friend*, and not only *ask* but *heed* the Aſſiſtance of their *Counſels and Prayers* *, and

* The Rev. Mr. *Clifford* in his *Preface* to his *Collections* from Mr. *Baxter*, of the *Signs and Cauſes of Melancholly*, tells us from Mr. *Bolton* ; " That too much *Secreſy* and *Con-* " *cealment* may cauſe the *Wound* of a terrified Conſcience " to *bleed inward*, *rankle*, *feſter* and grow *deſperate* ; " whereas ſeaſonable *Diſcovery* may comfort and *cure* it ;

" I

diligently apply, as to the *religious Duties*, ſo to the proper and peculiar *common and worldly Buſineſs* of the Day. Do not chuſe to be *much alone* with the *Tempter*; he is much too ſtrong for thee *by thy ſelf*. CHRIST indeed was led up by the SPIRIT into the *Wilderneſs* to be *tempted*, and continued in the *Solitude*; but He was *the Son of Man* whom GOD called *alone*, and made *ſtrong for himſelf*; the *Fulneſs of the* GODHEAD *was in Him*, and the SPIRIT *without Meaſure*; *and he was to tread the Winepreſs alone*. Do thou keep to the *Footſteps of his Flock*, whereof thou art a Member; *aſſociate* with them, in publick and private, and commune with them. As *Iron ſharpens Iron*, ſo the *Countenance of Friends* one another: It is more eſpecially ſo in *religious Friendſhips* and *Freedoms*: there let the *Friend* be unto thee *as thy own Soul*; but chuſe *wiſely*, ſuch as are *able* to adviſe thee, and will be ready and *faithful*. GOD has made us for one another, but we muſt *depend* on HIM alone, not on any *Arm of Fleſh*. Our *Faith* muſt not ſtand on the *Wiſdom of Men*, but on the *Power of GOD*; and we muſt *edify* one another by the written *Word* of GOD, and with the *Comforts* wherewith we our ſelves have been comforted

---

" I knew *One* who kept *cloſe* in his Boſom the Temptati-
" on of *Blaſphemy* for the Space of above *twenty Years*:
" All which Time the *Devil* tyraniz'd extremely, and
" kept him almoſt in continual *Terror*. He thought that
" there had never been *Man* before him that had ſuch *vile*
" and prodigious Thoughts, and that if the World knew
" what they were, he ſhould be abhorr'd as a *Monſter*,
" and the loathſomeſt Creature upon Earth. ---- But at
" laſt hearing the *Nature*, Manner and Remedy of theſe
" hideous *Injections*, diſcover'd by the *Miniſtry* of the
" Word; and afterwards *privately* informing himſelf *fur-*
" *ther* and more fully from the *Miniſter*; he was happily
" *taken off the Rack* for Time to come, and moſt won-
" derfully refreſhed.---Uſe therefore the *Means*, and *mag-*
" *nify the Mercy* of GOD to You, if He *bleſs 'em* to
" bring you *out of* your ſad, dark and *diſconſolate Condi-*
" *tion*;" ---- or if he bleſs 'em to keep you from *falling into* it.

of

of GOD.---We *eaſe* one another's *Backs*, by *bearing* one another's *Burthens*. It is an *Honour* and Happineſs to be able to *admoniſh* and counſel one another, as there is Occaſion. " *Bleſſed be thou*, thy Wiſdom and Advice, ſaid *David* to *Abigail*. A *Soul-Friend* is a Friend indeed : This eminently is to *fulfil the Law of Love*. Love to GOD and Love to *Souls* is the fulfilling of the *Law*.

Mr. *Baxter* tells us, that of forty or *fifty* Perſons, who have been at a Time known to him, under the Oppreſſion of *blaſphemous* and vile Thoughts, there have not been *four or five* but were ſenſibly under the Power of *Melancholly*, either from their natural *Temperament*, or from *croſs* Providences, or ſome Spice of *Diſcontent* under their outward Circumſtances. We muſt neither *give Place to the Devil* by *Anger* or by *Melancholly* ; the *Tempter* makes Advantage of every *Temper*, and of every *Extream*. But in *one* particular all *Divines* agree and adviſe, and that is,

6. That afflicted *tempted Perſons make not too great a Matter of their moleſting Thoughts ;* which they are very *prone* to do, and they give the *Tempter* a great *Advantage* thereby. *Non multum volvat et revolvat Cogitationes iſtas*, ſays the very pious, judicious and learned *Van Maſtricht* : " Don't keep *poring* on and *revolving* in your Minds the Moleſtations given you ; but humbly *obteſt* and *plead* before GOD your utter *Averſion* to them, with *Thankfulneſs* to GOD for it ; and beg of him to enable you not to *lay 'em ſo to Heart*, as to be *hinder'd by 'em* in Matters of *preſent Duty*, toward GOD, your ſelves, your Families or Neighbours. Nay, be ſo much *afraid* of being *taken off* from the *Duties of the Day*, of whatever *kind* it be, at *Home*, in the *Shop*, or *abroad ;* as to be *driven to* theſe Duties, leſt you give Place to the *Tempter* : Rebuke him therefore and ſay, " *Depart from me*, thou *Evil One*, *for I will keep the Commandments of my GOD*.---And if yet you cannot get *rid* of him as you would, ſtill " *beware of a too intenſe contending with him* : rather " *turn away* ſays *one Divine* as from a

barking Dog, and as you would from a furious *Scold* in the Street, ſays *another*. Turn from 'em with a holy *Contempt and Diſdain*, as CHRIST rebuked them, " *Get thee hence Satan,*

I remember the *Venerable Mr. Baxter* ſpeaks on this *Argument* in the following Manner, " If you make a " great Matter of every *Thought* that is *caſt* into your " Mind, you keep 'em the *longer* in Mind, and 'tis the " Way to *fix* 'em there. Troubleſome Thoughts are " like angry *Scolds*, who if you regard and *anſwer* 'em " will *follow* and dog you, and never have done; but " if you *anſwer 'em not*, and *turn* from 'em, they'll have " *done* and give over; or at leaſt you *get out of hear-* " *ing 'em*.---- The *Devil*'s Deſign (ſays he) is to diſ- " quiet and *vex* you; let him ſee that you will not re- " gard him. He'll keep you *to it* all Day long, if he " finds you *hearkning* to and *anſwering* all he ſays. He " will take you off from *greater* Duties and from *all* " Duties, if you ſtay to *wrangle* with him."---- As the *Arch-Angel rail'd not* again at the *raving Devil*, but only ſaid " *the LORD rebuke thee*; ſo anſwer and *rebuke* the Injections of *Satan*, and *argue not* with him,----Yea, labour after a *placid Submiſſion* to the Will of GOD in his *holy Permiſſion* of them. Turn the *cruel* Exerciſe given by an *Enemy*, into a *Sacrifice* and Surrender to GOD. This Example *Job* gives in our Text, and ſo did CHRIST *in the Garden*; " *Father, let the Cup paſs! never the leſs not as I will.* St. *Paul* ſeems to have been in this *Frame* under the *Thorn*, and the *Anſwer* to his Prayer was, " *My Grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee.----Godlineſs with Contentment is great Gain*: We muſt labour after *Contentment* in the Will of GOD under the moſt *fiery Trials*: It is the *Sum* and *Crown* of all moral *Obedience*, active or paſſive: It is the *Top-ſtone* of the *Moral Law*, the *Ten Commandments*: We had not known *Sin*, nor yet the *Perfection of Grace* in a ſincere Obedience, if the *Law had not ſaid*, and ended thus, "*thou ſhalt not covet.* There is *one Will in Heaven*, which is GOD's, and thence is the Perfection of *Holineſs* and *Happineſs.*

Happineſs. If it could be *thus* on Earth, we ſhould be *perfect* too here below. That we may be ſo, as far as is *poſſible*, *Contentment* in the whole *Will* of GOD is the *laſt* Commandment. This would *fulfil* the whole Law, in both the *Tables* of it; in all the *Devotion* we owe to GOD, in all the *Love* we owe to *our Neighbour*, and in all the *Care* we ſhould have of our *own Souls*. And to *exhibit*, evidence and promote this *bleſſed Frame* in us under the moſt *fiery Trials*, let me proceed to another *Rule* or Direction, which is

7. Make Conſcience of *daily* exerciſing your ſelves in *Adoration*, *Bleſſing*, *Thankſgiving* and *Praiſe* to GOD; more eſpecially for CHRIST and the *ſure Mercies* of the Everlaſting *Covenant* of Grace, purchas'd and ratified by his *Blood*. *In GOD I will praiſe his Word, in the LORD I have put my Truſt, I will not fear what Fleſh* (or *Spirit*) *can do unto me*; when they *would ſwallow me up*! or *while fighting daily they oppreſs me*. Pſalm lvi. 1, 4. This is to *fly to the Rock of* Salvation, and *haſten our Eſcape from the windy Storm and Tempeſt*. For the *Name of the LORD is a ſtrong Tower, which the righteous fly to and are ſafe*; and the Promiſes in CHRIST are the *Anchor* of our Souls in every *Storm* of Temptation.

"Tie your ſelves daily therefore (ſays Mr. *Baxter*) to ſpend as much Time in confeſſing *Mercies receiv'd*, as in confeſſing *Sins committed*. Be more in the *Praiſes of GOD*, and leſs in *bewailing your ſelves*. *Thankſgiving* is the *greater* Duty; give *this* the largeſt Share of your Time :---- As Change of *Diet* will change the Temperature of the *Body*, ſo you may *ſweeten* your embitter'd Minds by *delightful* Thoughts of GOD. Praiſe Him for his *Mercy* and his *Truth*, when the *Tempter* would have you *queſtion* or deny both. You will find your *Graces* move, and *Comforts* flow by this Means; as when you go into *Sun-ſhine* you find Light and Warmth. ---- Or if you can't find at laſt that you have the *delighting Love* which you deſire, you may not be able to deny but you have a *deſiring* ſeeking and *lamenting* Love. Thank GOD for *this*, and take Encouragement from it,

it, and it will increaſe both Love and Comfort.---- But after all, as *he* goes on to *adviſe* and direct

8. " *Overvalue not the paſſionate Part of Duty,* nor build too much on *Tranſports of Joy* as the ſureſt *Evidences* of true Grace, or neceſſary to a *Walk* before GOD and *Communion* with Him ; but know that a reſolved humble *Choice* and Endeavour are the *Life* of Grace and Duty ; when *Feelings* are but *lower* and uncertain Things. ---- This is another of the *Rules* given by the heavenly and experienced Mr. *Baxter.*

" You know not what you do, ſays he, when you lay ſo much on the *paſſionate* Part, and are ſtriving for deep and *tranſporting* Apprehenſions : Theſe are not the *main* and great Things, nor the *Eſſentials of Holineſs.* Too much of this *Feeling* may diſtract you : and GOD knows beſt how *much* of it may be *good* for you, or what you may be *able* to bear.----Paſſionate *Feelings* (ſays he) depend much on *Nature* ; ſome People are much more *ſenſible* than others ; a *little* Thing goes *deep* with 'em. The moſt *wiſe* and *ſolid* are uſually the *leaſt* paſſionate, and the *weakeſt* hardly moderate their Paſſions. GOD is not an Object of *Senſe,* but of the *Underſtanding* and Will. I have known many *complain* for Want of deeper *Feelings,* when if they had been *more,* it might have *diſtracted* them." Thus *He.*

Some *good Souls* have been ready to wiſh they could feel *greater Degrees of Terror,* ſuch as they have *ſeen others* in, or *heard* 'em tell of their paſſing thro' : but this does not ſeem to be a *natural* Exerciſe of Grace, whether we conſider GOD or our *Selves :* For, the *Pains* of every *Birth* belong to GOD alone to *order,* and not at all to *us to chuſe :* And as we are very thankful to GOD when a *Child* is born with *fewer* and more *gentle* Pains to the Mother ; ſo by all means ought the *Soul* to be that paſſes thro' the *New-Birth,* by the Will of GOD, with leſſer *Agonies* of Diſtreſs: for *Inſtance,* --- tho' the *Jailor* could never enough be thankful to GOD, that he *broke open* his hard Heart, like the *Iron Gate of the Priſon,* by the Terrors of an *Earthquake* ; --- yet ought not

Lydia

Lydia to be as much *rais'd* in Gratitude to the ſame *Sovereign Grace*? and was ſhe not as much *affected* (think you) with the Kindneſs and *Gentleneſs of* GOD in his dealing with her in a more *mild* and *placid* manner? Acts xvi. 14. " *Whoſe Heart the* LORD *opened, that ſhe attended to the things ſpoken by Paul; and when ſhe was baptiſed and her Houſhold, ſhe beſought us ſaying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my Houſe and abide there: and ſhe conſtrained us.*

9. Look to thy holy, *humble, conſtant, even,* and if poſſible *chearful Obedience to the Laws of the Goſpel*; that thou *be righteous before* GOD, *walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the* LORD, *blameleſs.* " O That my " *Ways were directed* (as *David* teaches us to pray) that " *I might keep thy Precepts!* then ſhall I not be *aſhamed,* " when I have *Reſpect* unto *all* thy Commandments! " I *will* keep thy Statutes, *forſake* me not utterly" --- " *Walk before me,* ſaid GOD to *Abraham,* and be thou " *perfect*; and lo I *eſtabliſh my Covenant* with thee; ---" The LORD *is with you* while ye be *with Him*; and if you *ſeek* him he will be *found* of you; but if you *forſake* him he will forſake you. Look diligently to thy *holy living,* and *Satan* ſhall never *hurt* you. " *Eſchew Evil,* and GOD will make his *Hedge* about you. " Who ſhall *harm* you if you be *Followers* of that which is *good.* " GOD is faithful who will not *ſuffer* you to be *tempted* " above what you are *able,* but will with the Tempta- " tion find a way to *eſcape.*---*Satan* will be diſcouraged if he ſees he can't *hinder* thee in *holy living,* but only *quickens* thee in thy Care and *Heed* thereto. This is to turn the *Devil's Weapons* againſt him, and to *ſtab him* with his *own Sword.* The righteous ſhall *hold on* his Way; GOD will not ſuffer his Feet to be *moved,* and he that hath *clean Hands* ſhall wax *ſtronger and ſtronger.*--- Anſwer therefore and rebuke the *Tempter,* ſtrong in *Faith*; " *depart* from me, thou *evil One,* for *I will* keep the Commandments of my GOD! " LORD I will keep thy Statutes, O *forſake* me not utterly! --- That Temptation is loſt on us that does not cauſe us to *tranſ-*

greſs;

greſs; but if it increaſe our *Watch* unto Prayer and Obedience it is our *Gain.* " He that committeth *Sin* is of the *Devil*, but in this the *Children of* GOD *are manifeſt*; " how ſhall *I do this Wickedneſs* and ſin againſt GOD! " Ye are then of GOD, *little Children*, and have *over-* " *come!* for *greater is* HE *that is in you, than he that is in the World.*

10. After all, and in all, *build* nothing upon thy *own Righteouſneſs*, nor *act* or *truſt* in thy own *Strength*; but ſeek to and rely on CHRIST for Righteouſneſs and Strength; and caſt thy *polluted, guilty*, periſhing, *wounded* Soul on the *free Sovereign Grace*, Mercy and Compaſſion of GOD, imploring the everbleſſed ETERNAL SPIRIT, the *Convincer* of Sin, the *Sanctifier* of Souls, and then their COMFORTER, to be ever *with thee*; to *ſuccour* and ſupport thee, to defend and *keep* thee, to *rebuke the Tempter*, to *bruiſe* him under thy ſtaggering Feet; and *ſay* unto thee, " *My Grace is ſufficient for thee*, and *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.*---Thus go in the Name of CHRIST to the Everlaſting FATHER for the Gift of his HOLY SPIRIT, to ſhew thee the *Evil of Sin*, to work in thee a *ſaving Humiliation* for it, to give thee a true and *deep Repentance*, Contrition and *Self-loathing* on the Account of it, to *enable thee to cry* for Pardon and Renovation; to be *in thee* the *Spirit of Grace and Supplication*, to help thee with *Groanings* which cannot be uttered, and ſuccour thee when tempted; to work *Faith* in thee and the proper *Exerciſe* of it upon every Occaſion, in *every Time of Need*; to make it work by *Love*, to make thee know the *Love of* CHRIST which paſſes Knowledge; to *ground and root* it in thee; to give thee and encreaſe in thee *a Child-like Fear* and Reverence, and a *Chriſt-like Submiſſion* to his and thy *Heavenly Father*, his GOD and thine; a Covenant GOD and FATHER in Him. ----And then to be thy COMFORTER; for it is his bleſſed *Office*, under and from the *Aſcended* SAVIOUR; who was *tempted*, and that hideouſly, both in the *Wilderneſs* and in the *Garden*; and in *our ſtead*, bearing the Sins of *his Elect*, and is therefore able to *ſuccour them that be tempted.*

---O

---O implore the *exalted* JESUS to endue thee from *on High*, with the HOLY SPIRIT *of Promiſe*; not as on the Day of *Pentecoſt* with his extraordinary Operations or *Manifeſtations*; it would be a *ſatanical Deluſion* and high *Preſumption* in thee to look for any thing of this Nature; but *beg of* HIM what is infinitely *better*, his HOLY SPIRIT in his common and ordinary *Influences* to *renew* and change thee, to *purify thy Heart*, to give thee new and *holy Affections*, and in them a *new Nature*; and to put on thee the whole *Armour* of GOD, whereby thou mayeſt *ſtand in the evil Day*, and finally *overcome* all thy ſpiritual Enemies.

Make therefore the *Name and Righteouſneſs of* CHRIST, and the *Promiſes* in Him, thy *Sanctuary and Tower* of Salvation, and *fly* to that and be *ſafe*. All thy *Help* comes thro' HIM and from *Him*: fly to the *Rock*, whither *Satan* cannot come. --- You know how the *Devil tore and threw the poor Child*, as they *bro't it to* CHRIST; but inſtantly he *left* it, and *fled* from the Face of the SON OF GOD. The *Lion of the Tribe of Judah* will prevail; He has *prayed* for thee, that thy *Faith do not fail*; and however *Satan* may be permitted to *ſift* thee, *fail* it ſhall not, if thou relieſt on his *Interceſſion*.---For this *End* the SON OF GOD was manifeſted, to *deſtroy the Works of the Devil*, and to ſnatch the bleeding *Lambs* from his *Jaws*: the *Son of David* is ſtill going againſt the *Lion and the Bear* to ſave his *Flock* from their Teeth; He is the *good Shepherd* and *knows his Sheep*, and they ſhall *never periſh*, nor ſhall any *pluck* them out of his Hand. He has *ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them on his Croſs*; He conquer'd, in his Death and *Reſurrection*, he triumph'd in his *Aſcention*, and reigns in his *Exaltation*: Revel. i. 18. "I am *He that liveth*, and *was dead*, and *am alive for Evermore, Amen*; *and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.*

And as to *Doubts and Fears* which the *Godly* may ſtill have at Times, about their *Love to* GOD, their *Election, Vocation, Faith, Repentance, Juſtification, Sanctification and Perſeverance*; they muſt recur to CHRIST and the bleſſed

SPIRIT of GOD; " *Pendulus ſemper a Bonitate et Auxilio* DEI, as Mr. *Maſtricht* expreſſes it; *hanging* as a *Child* about the *Parent's* Arms for Safety; *caſting all our Cares* and Fears *upon Him, who careth for us;* who has ſaid to us---- " *be without Carefulneſs, for I will never leave thee nor forſake thee!* " *fear not ye for I know that ye ſeek* JESUS *which was crucified!* And again, *Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not diſmayed I am thy GOD; I will ſtrengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right Hand of my Righteouſneſs.*

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 14. l. 24. dele him. P. 18. l. 16. r. Tears. l. 18. r. Fears. P. 22. l. 38. r. Flight.

APPENDIX.

AN excellent LETTER on the foregoing *Subject* coming lately into my Hand, I have prevail'd with the *Person* to whom it was wrote, to yield to my publishing a Part of it, as I now do, without asking Leave of the Revd. and judicious *Writer* of it,--for I truly think it will make up some *Defects*, and also give Strength and *Force* to some Things said, in this *Treatise*.

July 19. 1743.

Dear Sir,

I Think your *Difficulties* are not *peculiar* to you, but such as I have met with *frequent* Instances of; tho' Persons under suchlike Difficulties are ready to think them peculiar, and that *no One's Case* is like their's.--It is evident that *Satan's* Design is to *hinder* their serving GOD, and using the proper Means for their own Profit and Comfort; by wasting away their Time and Lives in unprofitable Exercises of Mind, needless Doubts, Scruples, Terrors, and fighting with Shadows; and it soon thro' Melancholly becomes *natural* for them to *pore* upon that which is unprofitable; and thereby they feed their own *Disease*, and *involve* themselves more and more, till they get an *Aversion* to, and *object* most against, those *Things* which have the greatest Tendency to their *Relief*: There is a certain *Gloom* upon the Mind which the *Devil* makes great Advantage of; for it weakens the Mind and disables it from guarding against him; to his utmost therefore he strives to *increase* that Gloom; (for he sees that the *Mind* while under it is like *a City without Walls*) and to that End will ever now and then be casting in some *horrid Tho't*, or frightful Suggestion, or Temptation: And if the Person in such

a Caſe goes to *diſpute* with him, or *fight* againſt him, he often makes his *Advantage* of that very diſputing and fighting; and by that Means *plunges* the Soul deeper and deeper, and entangles it more and more. The beſt Way of *reſiſting* the ſubtle and ſtrong Adverſary is to *neglect* him, turn *from* him, and not *enter* into Diſputes with him; nor take ſo much *Notice* of his Suggeſtions, however frightful and horrid, as to be *alarm'd* with them: For if he has once alarm'd and *affrighted* the Soul, then he has gain'd a great *Advantage* againſt it, and he will be ſure to *improve* it to his utmoſt. --- The beſt Way is for a Perſon to *look unto GOD* for Help, and *go right on his Way*, and not *ſtand to hear* what the Devil has to ſay. This above any other Courſe *diſappoints* him, for hereby he *loſes his Opportunity* to try his Strength and *Subtilty* with us; for he knows well that if he can *draw* into a Diſpute with him he ſhall be too *ſubtil* for us: A *Reſolution* to go ſtedfaſtly right forward in the Way of *Duty* and of *all* Duty, (if one could maintain it) without ſtanding *ſtill*, or turning *aſide*, is one of the beſt *Remedies* under ſuch ſort of Difficulties.--The great *Strife* of the Devil is to weaken and *break* ſuch Perſons *Reſolution* and Stedfaſtneſs in the Way of Duty, and either by *Terror* or *Perſwaſion* to make 'em *neglect ſome Ordinance*, or ſome Duty of our *general* or particular *Calling*; ſome Duty of *Worſhip*, or ſome neceſſary *worldly Buſineſs*; or ſomething that Providence *calls* us to, by which we might *profit* our Selves, our *Families*, our *Neighbours* or the public *Societies* unto which we belong. And I have obſerv'd that Perſons under ſuch Circumſtances, being in *Darkneſs* and Doubts of the *State* of their Souls, *generally take a wrong Courſe* to obtain Satisfaction: they ſpend all their Time almoſt *in anxious poring on paſt Experiences*, and *viewing 'em over and over*: Not but that they *ought to examine* paſt Experience; but this is not *all*, nor yet the *main* Thing they have to do: Deliverance from Doubts and Darkneſs, in ſuch *Caſes*, is not obtain'd chiefly *by Self-Examination*, but *Action*. I have always obſerv'd that when Perſons inſtead of *applying* themſelves with all their Might

Might to *ſeek GOD* and his Grace, and to *ſerve him, forgetting the Things that are behind,* and *preſſing forward* in the Way of all Duty, as tho' they *counted not themſelves to have apprehended*; I ſay, when inſtead of *this,* they *neglect their great Work,* and *abandon themſelves to muſing, poring and looking over Things that are paſt*; they get *nothing* by it: A ſpending *ſeven Years* in thus examining *paſt* Experiences or *preſent* Circumſtances, brings 'em *no nearer* to Satisfaction; but rather *intangles* and *perplexes* their Minds more and more, and gives *Satan* greater Advantage: And however with their examining themſelves they do as they *think* ſtrive to *go on* in a Way of *Duty,* yet in their *ſeeking GOD* they commonly err in *four* Things:

1. They ſeek him with an *unſubmiſſive Spirit.* It is true they ſometimes ſeek *earneſtly* and with *Bitterneſs of Soul*; but there is commonly *a Sort of Uneaſineſs,* and inward *Tumultuouſneſs,* and *Unquietneſs* of Spirit; which ſhows a *Want* of that *humble, meek, calm* and ſubmiſſive Spirit, that becomes a poor *unworthy Worm,* and more eſpecially a *Chriſtian,* or a *Child of GOD,* when GOD *frowns* or *hides his Face.* I have often ſeen *this*; they have ſome Degree of that *Frame* which *Job* had before *Elihu* ſpake, and GOD after him out of the *Whirlwind*; they *complain* "that they *cry to GOD* and he does *not anſwer,* they *ſeek* him but they cannot *find* him; "*they go forward, but he is not there*; *and backward but they can't perceive him!* He ſeems to *ſhut out their Prayer, and turn a deaf Ear* to them. But I have known many *Inſtances* of ſuch as made theſe *Complaints,* being brought afterwards by the Grace of GOD to ſeek him after quite *another* Manner; to lie as it were at his *Foot,* in a humble ſubmiſſive *quiet* Frame of Spirit, in a great Senſe of their utter *Unworthineſs,* and of GOD's Holineſs and *Sovereignty,* and ſo remaining in a calm *waiting* Frame; when once they have been brought to *this,* all their *Clouds* have been *ſcatter'd,* and GOD has wonderfully appeared and *unveil'd* himſelf for their *Conſolation*: and I never knew it *fail,* when Perſons after great *Darkneſs,* and having been

been long *toſs'd* up and down, as in a tempeſtuous *Ocean*, have been *brought to this Temper*; GOD has as it were ſhown himſelf in haſte to comfort them; and *ran* (as it were) to *meet* 'em, while they were yet a great Way *off*: CHRIST has been like the ſwift-footed *Roe*, or the *young Hart on the Mountains of Spices*.

2. Another *Error* in ſuch Perſons *ſeeking GOD*, is ſeeking with *Diſcouragement*. *Before they ask* they do as it were *conclude* they ſhall have a *Denial*; and *while* they are asking, they do as it were *tell GOD* that he *won't anſwer 'em*; and ſo they greatly *diſhonour* him, deny him the *Glory* of his Grace, and provoke a Denial. They ask in a *heartleſs* Manner, becauſe in a *diſcourag'd* Manner. Hence they have no *Reſolution* to ſay as *Jacob* did, "*I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me.* When they *ask* and are *denied*, it has not that *Effect* upon them, as it had upon the *Woman of Canaan*, to make her *cry the more earneſtly*, and to be the more *reſolute*. On the *contrary*, they are *knock'd on the Head*, and are ready to conclude, that GOD *don't intend* to ſhow 'em Mercy, and that *his Mercy is clean gone for evermore*.

3. Another *Error* in their ſeeking is, that they *ſeek Comfort more than Holineſs*. We ought to ſeek *Comfort*, and the Joy of the *Light of GOD's Countenance*, as of more *Worth* than all the World; but our Minds ſhould be more *engaged*, and our *Strength* more imploy'd, in an earneſt *Care* and Strife to do our *Duty to* GOD, and to *ſerve* him; than to *attain* the Comfort of *Satisfaction about our own Condition*: It ſhould be our *Meat and Drink to do the Will of GOD*: If we take effectual Care of *this*, GOD will take Care of our *Comfort*, and will do that for us, which *we* can never do for our Selves: He'll ſcatter our *Clouds* and Darkneſs, and fill our Souls with *Light*.

4. Another *Error* in ſuch Perſons *ſeeking GOD* is, that they do not ſeek him in the Way of *all Duty*. It may be they abound in *praying*, and *reading*, and *meditating*, and *faſting*; and *lie upon their Faces* as *Joſhua* did, when *ſmitten before Ai*; but they are not ſo thorough in the mean

mean Time *to ſearch out the Achan*; the *Treſpaſs* in every Way of the *Commandments* of GOD. For GOD is to be ſought and *waited on* in the Way of the *Practice* of *every Thing* that he calls us to, whether they be the *Duties* of the *firſt* or *ſecond Table*; the immediate Duties of *Religion*, or of *ſecular Buſineſs*: Theſe are *all* of 'em *Wiſdom's Gates* and the *Poſts of her Doors*, where we are to *watch* and *wait*.

Thus Sir, I have briefly expreſs'd my *Thoughts* with Regard unto the *Difficulties* of that Nature which you labour under. *Experience* abundantly convinces me of my *Inſufficiency* to relieve in ſuch Caſes. It is GOD that muſt help to *give good Advice*, and alſo to *follow* it. It is the *good Shepherd* muſt *ſeek his Sheep*: To His Alſufficient *Power* and Grace I recommend your *Caſe*, and am

Sir,

Your Obliged Friend

and Servant,

********* *********

Ips. Gm. Annex
252.1
Colman

Ipswich Public Lib
Ipswich, Massachuse

IPSWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 2122 00230 354 7